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#9

spring 2005



RANCID NEWS #10

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We've had to put the subscription rate up because of the weight of the zine. Subscriptions really help us out, if you like the zine then get a sub, its the best way to show us appreciation. Subs start #10.

Contribute

We need interviews. We need articles. We need comics. We need artwork. We need poems (so long as they're good and not about drum circles). We need photos. We need thoughts. We need ideas. RN doesn't magically appear out of nowhere, and we need help producing it.

Next Issue

Lots of bands we haven't told they're getting interviewed yet, and a couple we have. It may be another themed issue, but you shall all have to wait and see. It's coming out the third week of May '05 & will have 116 pages again. It'll be awesome. Promise.

Ad Rates

1/6 page = £12/ \$20/ 18euro 1/4 page = £20/ \$35/ 30euro

1/2 page = £40/ \$70/ 60euro 1 page = £80/ \$130/ 110euro

ad deadline for #10 is March 20th

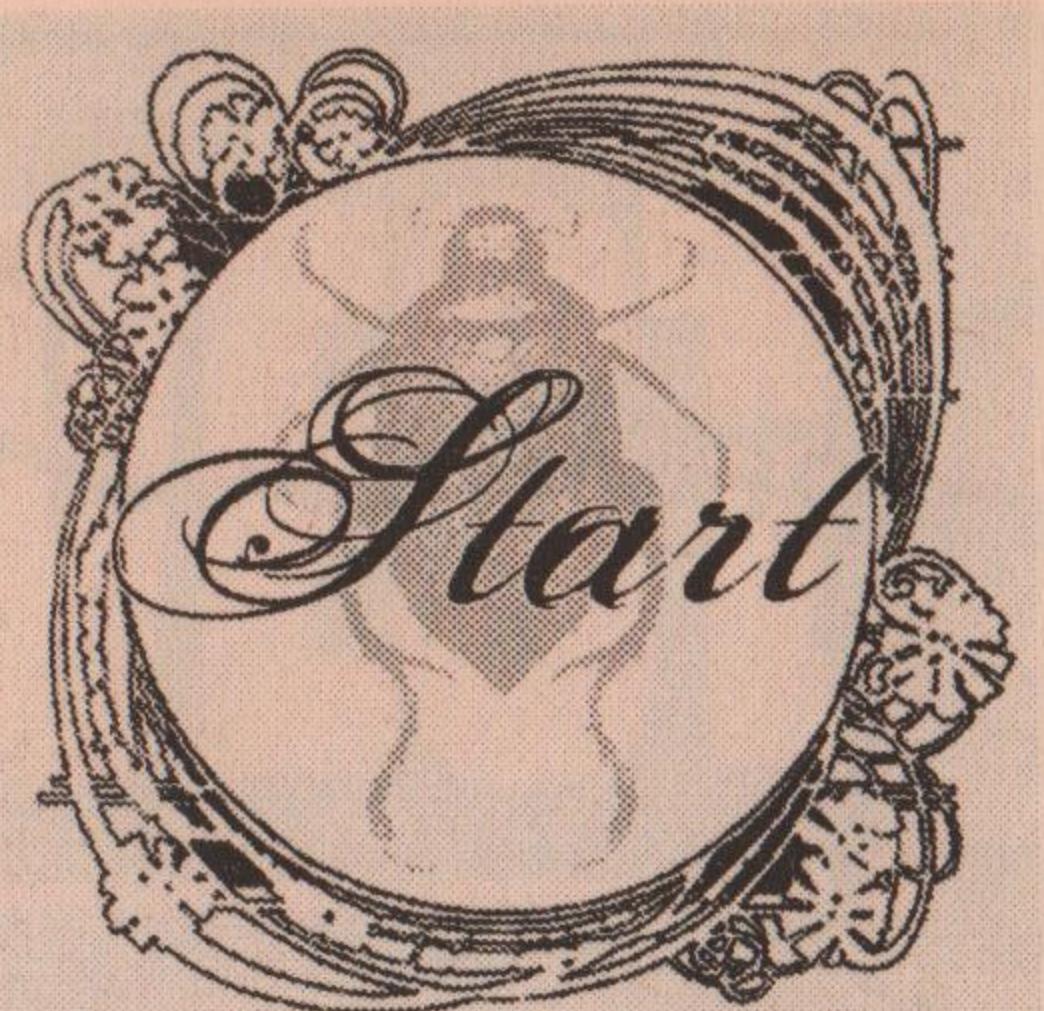
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steal, ripoff, plagiarise, copy and/or misquote anything in this zine in any way that you see



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We Got [not] Soul

I've got ten minutes left to write an introduction? Fun! I don't know why we always leave this to the last minute.

First things first, you might have noticed that this came out - just about - on time! This was because we cunningly gave ourselves three months to put it together. It worked so well that we're gonna be doing it this way for the foreseeable future.

We all individually have far too many other projects to do to commit to putting out 116 pages every eight weeks, and then trying to sell all 4,000. Putting it out every 3 months also gives us a chance to get it further afield (i.e. main land Europe). That's happened to an extent with this issue, but hopefully more zines will find their way across to the mainland with this issue.

In other Rancid News... umm... news lots of new people started to help out, which has been awesome. Phil Chokewood, who writes a fucking awesome zine (Facial Disobedience) and sings in an awesome band (Pilger - who got interviewed in #6 btw) started writing a column, as did Christian 'Gawkroger', who'd previously just kept himself reserved to being a geek about music. Then Joe from Jets Vs Sharks has contributed lots of reviews, photos and the Malkovich interview. There'll be more of his interviews in the next issue. Darren and Lily both started helping too, and a nice guy called Matt went out and did the Exeter Body Piercing interview, whilst Tim Forster caught up with Adequate Seven to do an interview. I think this marks the first time when I've contributed under

50% of the interviews to the current issue, which is a nice feeling! Mention should also go to Chronic Fatigue for more rad art, and also to Kate Escarriot and Shaun 5K for theirs. I'm gonna stop now, it's looking worryingly like a 'thank you' list.

People have been saying really kind things about RN#8 too. Hopefully you'll enjoy this. Whatever you think about it'd be cool to get feedback. We've started rancid news crue

to get a little, but it's nice to know what people do and don't like. We're not gonna change jack shit, but it's nice to know that people are actually reading it, rather than it just being something they pick up for a quid and then lose in their room.

Five minutes to go.

You know I'm quite impressed I've managed to get that many words out in five minutes, and they're bordering on coherent, which is odd considering how long I've been awake, and the fact that the only thing I've listened to for the past two days is Propagandhi's 'How To Clean Everything', because I can't find either of their other albums in my room.

I'm desperately trying to think of other things worth mentioning. I guess I could say the obvious: George Bush might very well kill us all in the next four years.

Though I think it's more likely he's just going to keep killing a whole load of Arabs. Oh well maybe we can stop him. If the kids are united we can never be defeated and all that bollocks!

Two minutes to go.

And lots of space to fill.

Oh I probably should have mentioned that if you're interested in helping out then just email us. As it says on page 2 we always need interviews, artwork, photos, and everything else that's cool. We also need help with distro-ing the zine because we always do! Get in touch if you think that you can help out.

Still more space to fill.

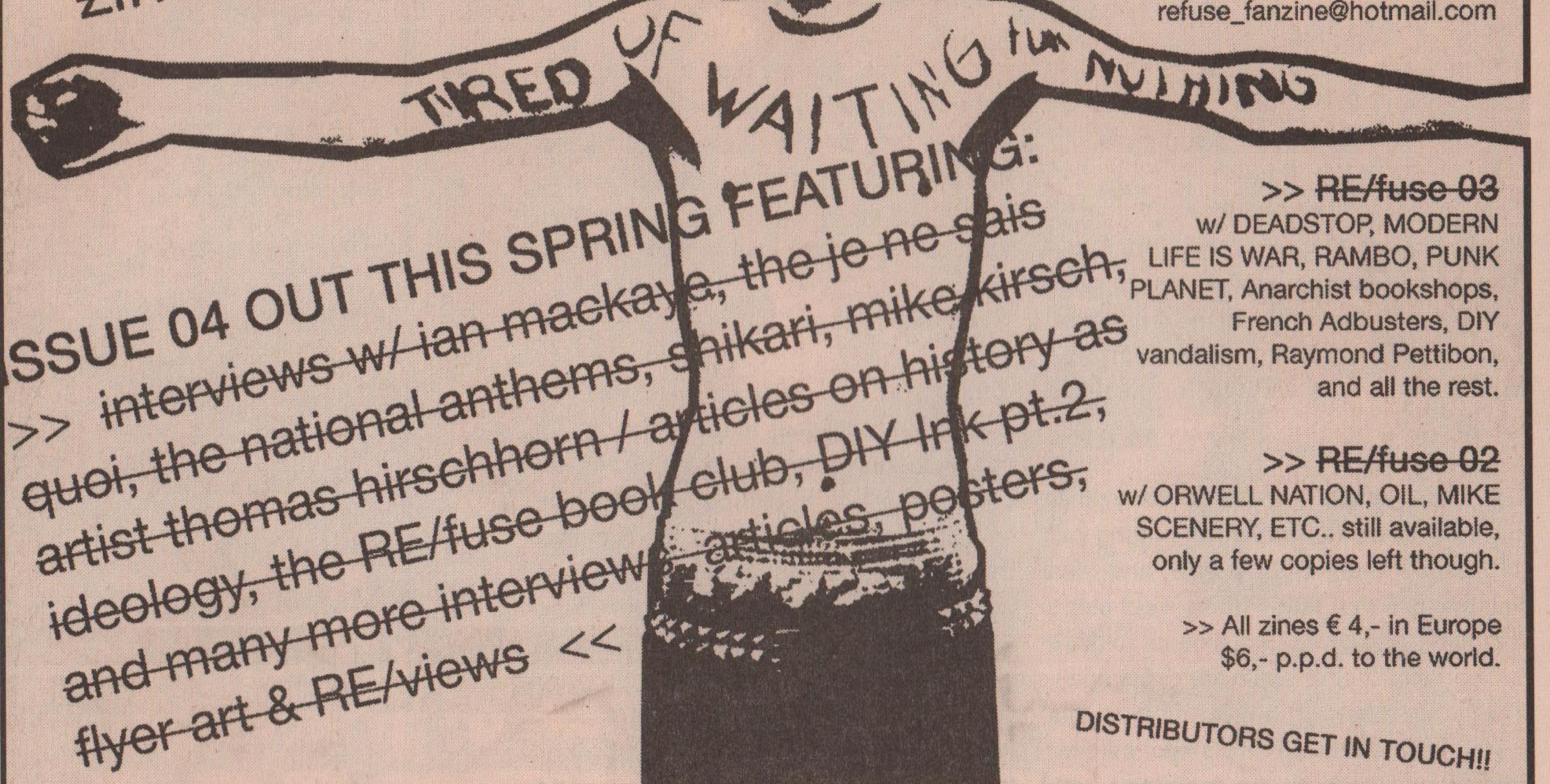
I'm running out of time really quickly.

Have you noticed how I'm putting lots of text breaks in to make it look like I've written lots.

Yeah, you know it's a lot harder writing these stupid things than it looks. Regardless I hope you enjoy the issue!

RE/fuse 04

zine for the euro trash masses



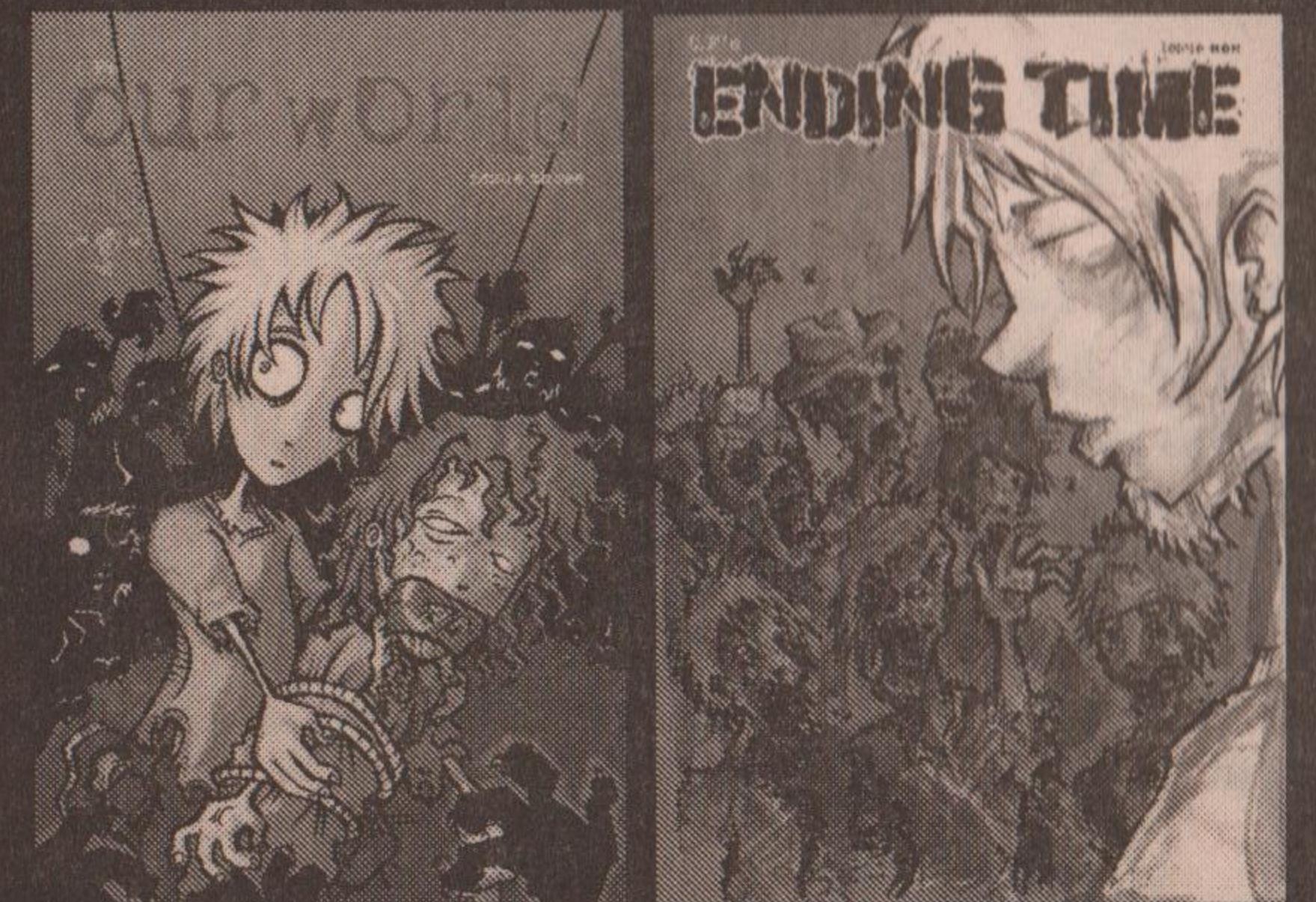
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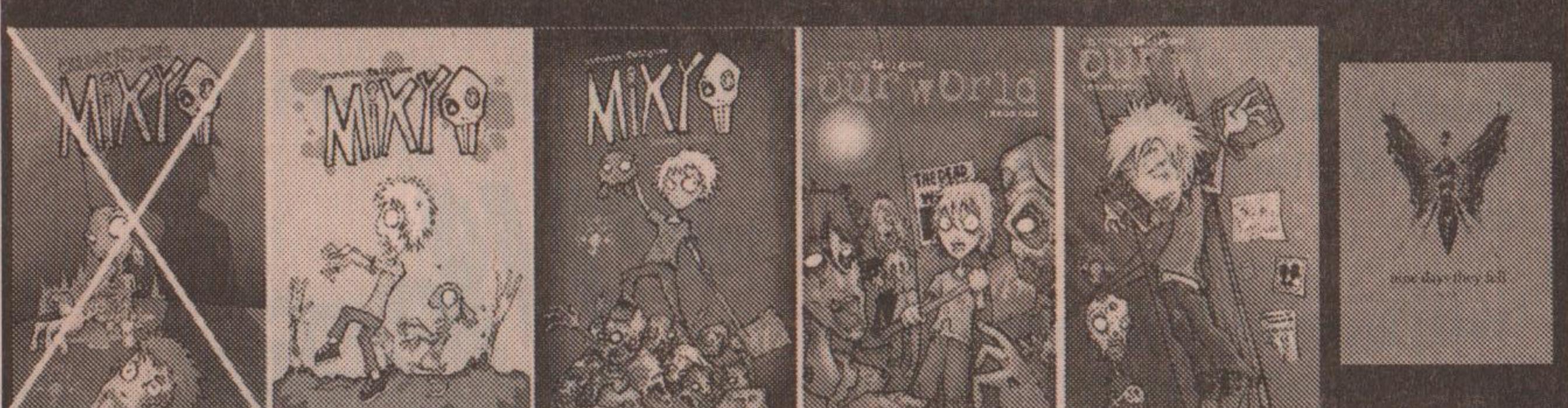
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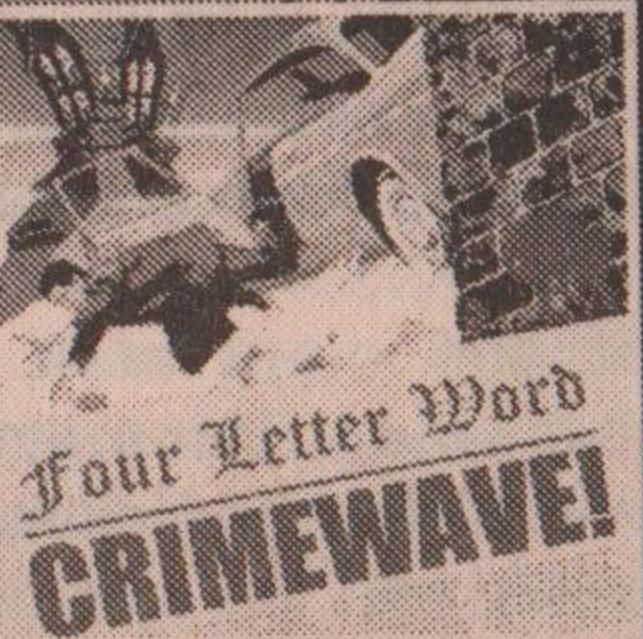


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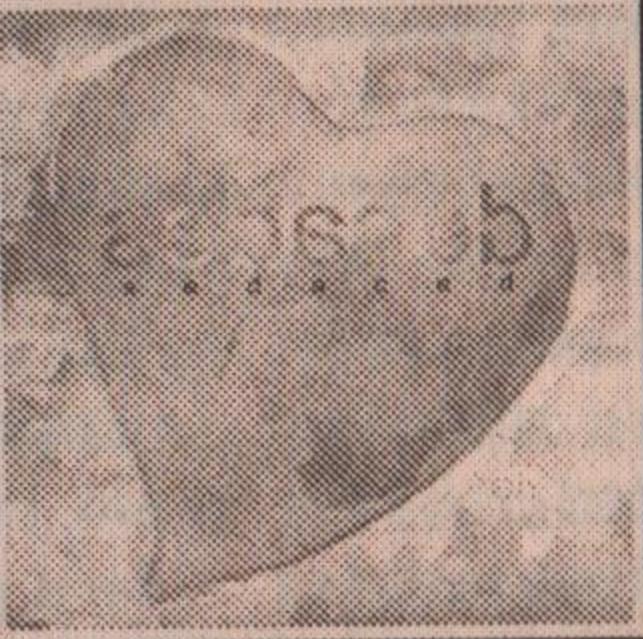
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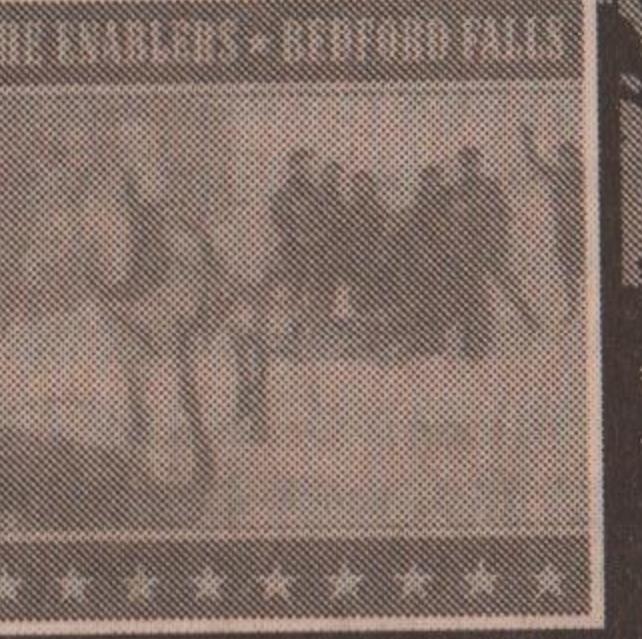
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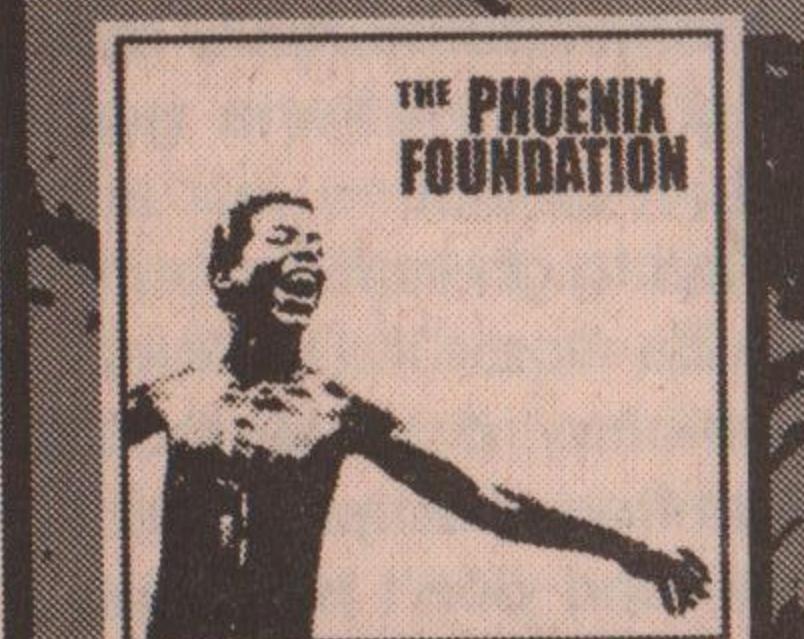
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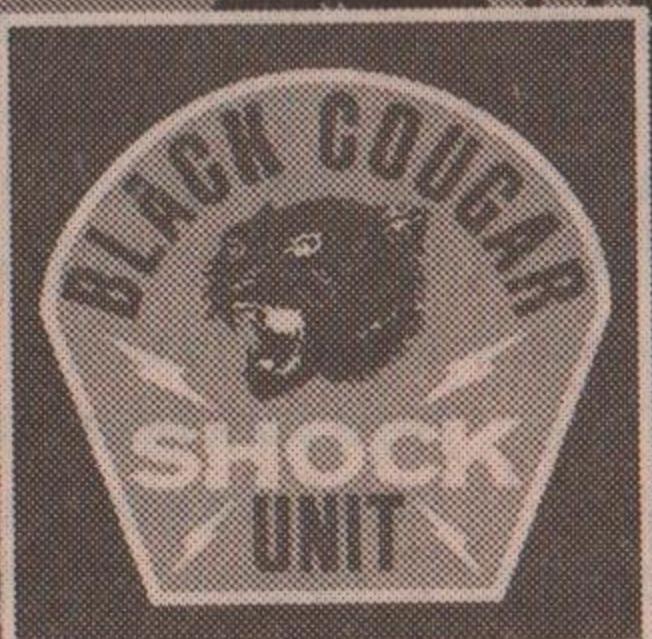
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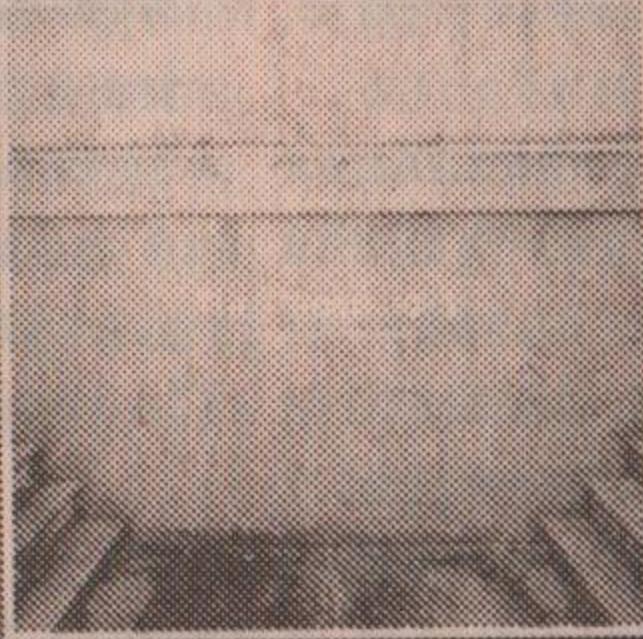
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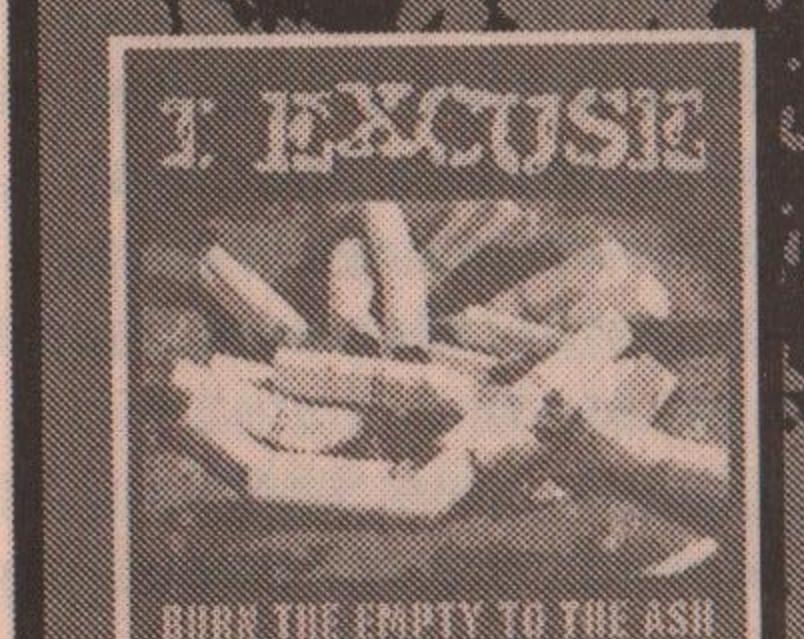
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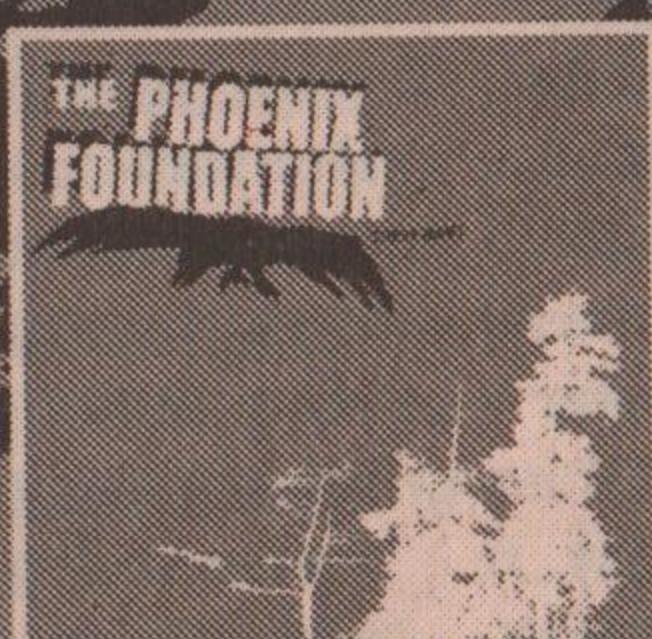
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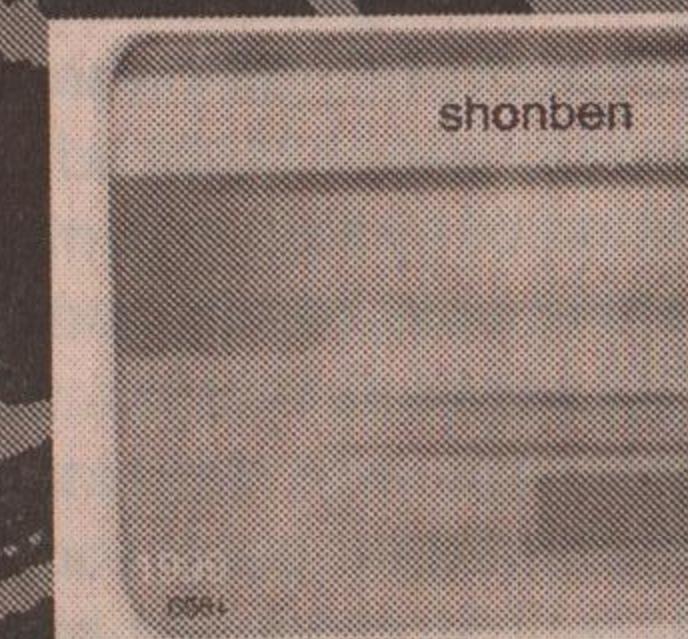
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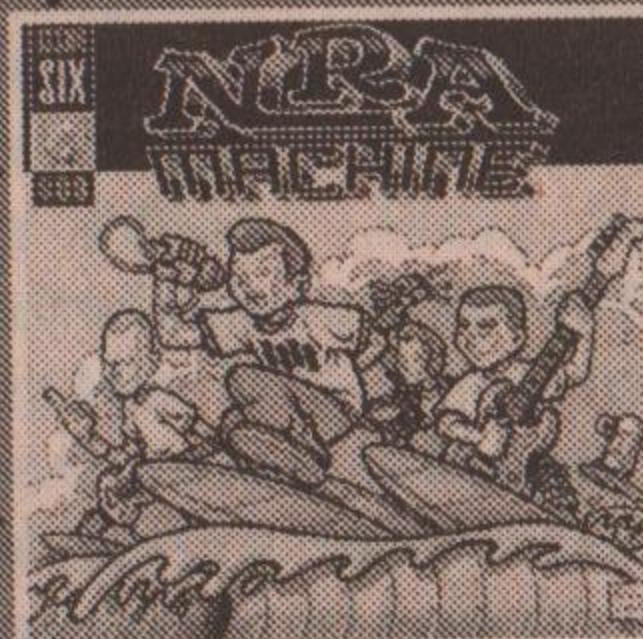
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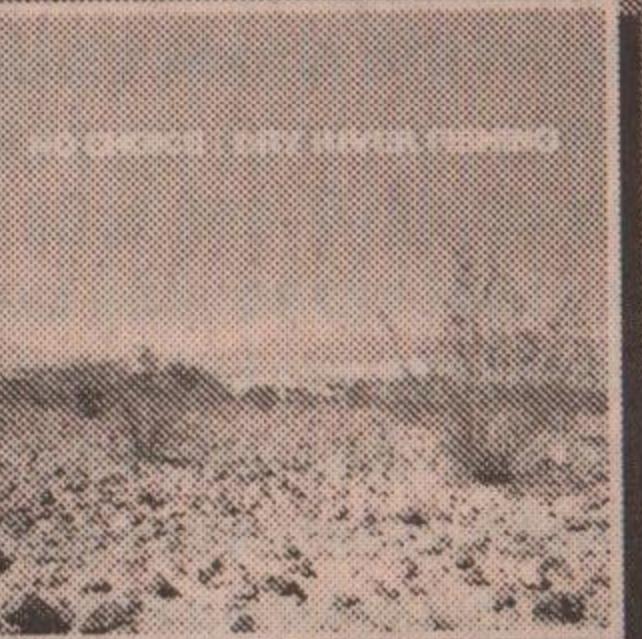
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So I've been halfway around the world and I'm back home now! My friend Mike and I decided it was time to leave for a while before getting too bogged down in the daily routine. Our destination was South Korea, since I was born and still have family there, but hadn't visited for 11 years. And to make it more interesting, and of course also ecologically more sound, we figured we'd go overland and not take any flights.

Going overland meant crossing Russia. This is a crazy country. I had fucken bizarre preconceptions – some of it influenced by the racket around and the hassles we experienced getting visas, which included lotsa bureaucracy, grumpy service and two mornings of queuing. But before we left I looked up Russian anarchist groups and punk contacts and emailed around, and got plenty of really nice replies. Hurra for genuine interest in each other!

When we first got into Moscow, we were very confused. As we stood in this absolutely ludicrously decorated metro station (Stalin built the metro in the 30's with the intention of creating 'palaces for the people'), we got hustled about by large Russian folk and scowled at by the ticket window. We could just about read Cyrillic and just about found our way. Moscow's big, full of history, as well as tower blocks, and rampant capitalism too. There are more advertising signs in the city centre than you can possibly imagine.

There's lots of people obviously just about getting by, by falling asleep on long shifts on their jobs (which we saw a lot!), or jumping the trains – everyone, except the pensioners who got free transport anyway, climbed over the barriers at this one local train station with the guard a few feet further looking the other way – it was quite a sight. There's plenty of people selling things from combs and odd gadgets to jumpers and fruit, just out of bags on the street, on the trains, or in the subway, as well as plenty of drinking.

We continued to be frightened of submitting ourselves to any 'service' situation (no 'have a nice day' here! Sometimes we even got shouted at when trying to buy something...), and we got lost a lot, and tried to avoid the ca. 150 000 cops in Moscow that supplement their shit income by fleecing everyone. But, we managed to meet up with some lovely punk rockers and anarchists. The scenes in Russia seem pretty small, friendly, and by necessity pretty hardcore/committed. We were lucky and there was stuff going on the few days

we spent in the capital – there was a Critical Mass bike demonstration, and we got to go to a gig too.

I hadn't been to a Critical Mass for a few years now, despite recently getting back into cycling. This form of action was fairly new to Moscow, and it was good to see people enthusiastic about it! Over 100 cyclists gathered, lots of them draped in bandages. Guess I should mention here what Moscow traffic is like – whoa!! I don't think I would dare cycle there myself, drivers are not exactly considerate and there's billions of cars and big scary roads. There's also no tradition of cycling as an actual means of transport, it seems to be more of a sport. Well, we didn't have bikes (didn't really fit into my backpack), so we waved the group off as they took the intersection and rode off, leaving a couple of cops behind looking confused. It was an action where the police didn't actually kick the shit out of anyone, which is apparently a much welcomed rarity.

We crossed the town on the metro and waited for the arrival of the demonstration at the other end – and again, it was so good to see people happy and excited afterwards! We shared some beer with some people calling themselves 'The Barbarians'. They were kind of like Hell's Angels on pushbikes. They all had cool fancy low riders, and seemed to be into drinking, smoking dope and rastafari.

We spent one night at a big, free warehouse gig/party. This may sound like fun, but it was in reality a Nokia sponsored 'let's get down with the kids' advertising coup, complete with large policemen searching you at the entrance, big TV screens inside showing dancing Nokia phones, and even salespeople approaching you to say 'hey dude, why haven't you got a Nokia phone' or some kind of equivalent in Russian. We left with a bunch of people and went to the flat we were staying at to drink vodka instead.

What a relief the Jerry Rubin Club was, in contrast! It's Moscow's only alternative venue, and it's a basement club on an estate that hosts gigs, meetings and film nights. Unfortunately, my memory of the night we spent there has faded (I did NOT get really pissed, it's just been a while!) and I can't remember exactly who played, duh. What kind of fucken columnist am I!

There were a couple bands from Moscow – 'Mashad' (? emo) and 'Lolo' (or similar – dressed in wigs and ladies clothes playing fun electronic punk rock/folk). A Latvian band 'Instora' were headlining, and played straight forward hardcore which I enjoyed. There was a comedy moshpit in the back, not in the front for some reason – I preferred this, since it meant people actually watching the band could actually watch. These big guys elbowed each other in some sort of redneck way, they even breast-collided (I don't know how to describe that better).

A guy at the gig told us matter of factly "These are all not proper Russian punks. Proper Russian punks look like Goblins." – "Eh?" – "They have pointy hoodies and look like Goblins. In the East, there are more proper Russian punks."

We tried to meet up with some hopefully goblin-hoodied punks we'd been given phone numbers for in Irkutsk – 4 days east of Moscow on the train, where we stopped mostly to see Lake Baikal – which is gorgeous by the way. Well we phoned them, on some shitty public phone that didn't really seem to work, and had a number of comedy conversations that kind of went: "... gave us your phone number! We are from England!" – "Da?" – "Hello, do you speak English?" – "Da?" etc. We didn't manage to meet up, and left some poor guys in Irkutsk pretty confused I guess.

I didn't want to reel off some big travel report here, but we did also go through Mongolia and China to get to Korea, where we marveled at the modernity of the city and the beauty of the countryside, and had to bow a lot to my relatives. We had a fucken amazing time the whole way. Except for one train in China, but that's another story.

Our journey homewards involved 6 days non stop on the train through Russia again. It was kinda nice, not having to do anything but lie around reading and drinking tea, and once in a while there was a 20 minute stop, and you could get off and check out all the snow and buy stuff off lil old ladies. The second time in Moscow, we just stayed in a mate's flat and got drunk. I think this is what Russians like to do in the winter. We also got to follow up on an invite and go to St Petersburg, which is lovely, and Riga in Latvia, where we met some really sound punks too (and finally saw a goblin hoodie!).

So, don't be afraid to go to Russia if you get the chance! It's worth it. Don't let the cops take your money, don't let the cold make your mouth freeze so you can't talk proper anymore, and don't miss out on trying all 12 types of Baltica beer (they're numbered! We couldn't find the strongest one – Number 12- anywhere though).

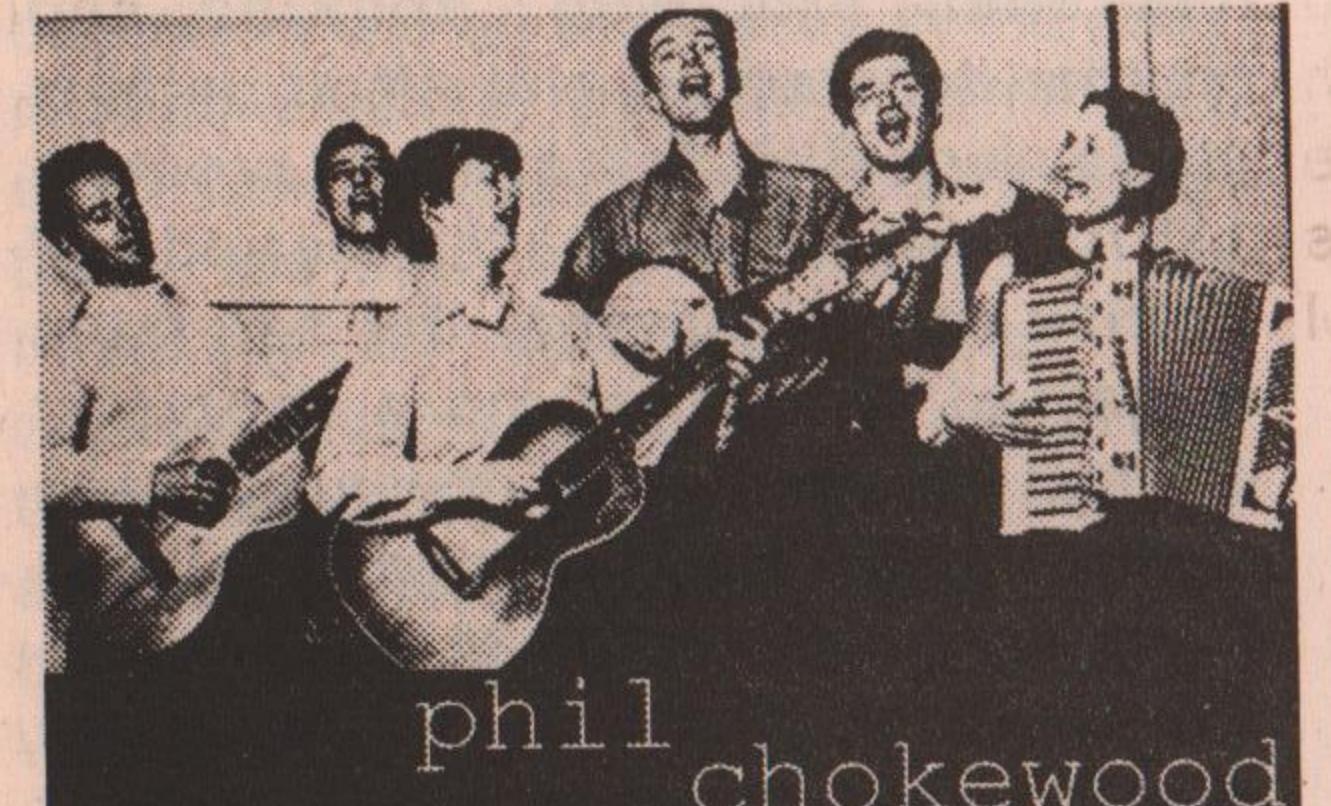
Some addresses:
www.punk.ru – It's a site and forum in Russian. So I have no idea what's on it, but lotsa people recommended it to me.
www.oskrecords.com – Moscow based label and gig organisers
www.sxsxs.cjb.net – ShSS, St Petersburg based label/distro/gig organisers
<http://jarryclub.narod.ru> – Moscow punk club. This is also in Russian, but you can get an idea.

www.pretspars.hardcore.it – anarchopunk zine and collective. The site's in Latvian but again, you can get an idea.
www.abb.hardcore.it – Excellent resource covering anarchist organisation

and struggle in Eastern Europe, and news and events. Print version is recommended – it's a bi-monthly bulletin available in the UK from Active Distribution, www.activdistribution.org.uk

Things I'm currently obsessed with: Chinese food especially broiled green soybeans in pods, trains, jasmin tea, funny words in different languages, snow, chipmunks, Korea's national parks and national food 'kimchi', Tragedy, Country music and Propagandhi still, mostly.

PS: In the last issue, I included some info on Billy Cottrell, a US physics student held on suspicion of ecologically motivated arson. Unfortunately, in the meantime he's gone to trial, and decided to name other people as the instigators of the arson in question, making him a snitch. I was pretty shocked and gutted, because I'd been writing to and supporting him. It should be a given we don't implicate others and turn into police informants if we are part of a movement... more info on www.brightonabc.org.uk
 Contact me: katchoo63@yahoo.co.uk



Bevois Valley: After a double scotch, the

blood vessels under your skin are dilating like pupils in a dark room. That's making the nice warm glow you're feeling about now. Apparently, the energy required for this is taken from vital organs, so in fact, later on, if we end up sleeping rough in the ice, unable to make it home, this is what will speed up our hypothermia. That hip flask of Tesco value scotch I brought to keep warm on the return journey? That's what kills hundreds of people each winter.

After two or three or four doubles, your mood and behavior have changed. This is when sometimes, you start throwing pint glasses or thinking you're funny when actually, you just called me a jerk off. Apparently, this is because your memory decreases and it becomes hard to judge situations. Good job for you that my coordination and vision are starting to go too, then, else one of us could be going home in an ambulance.

At five or six or seven doubles, things are great! Your behavior is a bit emotional but that's ok. Yeah, I love you too. Am I your best friend? Like totally! You're my favorite person EVER. I love you almost as much as my Radon 7" on purple vinyl. Your face is a bit red and swollen though, and your eyes look stoned. That feeling in the back of your throat? That means

we're going to be paying a taxi soiling charge. Maybe we should stay for a few more and drink through it. Maybe we can drink ourselves sober even.

Lets have a pint of Gandalf. Oh, you just passed out. I guess you know that though. Hmm. Would you hate me if I left now? Left you sat here, face down in the ash tray? Bugger. I can't stand up. Looks like I'm stuck with you...

Tanks, tanks, tanks!!! Bombs, bombs, bombs!!!

Archers Road: A friend of mine once said something along the lines of how beautiful the moon looked. We, quite rightly, called him a hippy cunt and wound him up about it for a while. Such was the spirit of the times. But, the moon does look beautiful tonight, dontcha think? You know, the Greeks called the moon Selene. Whatcha mean, you don't give a fuck? It's a pretty story. How do I know it? I work in a library, so fuck you. I am the keeper of all knowledge, dude. God, I feel better now I've puked in the church car park. You should try it dude.

Selene was the moon goddess. She had a white face, and a silver chariot pulled by two white horses and wore a half moon as a hat. Had three kids with Zeus, who if my middle school myths and legends are correct, put it about a bit with quite a few goddesses. Selene herself had a few love affairs, although apparently not as many as her sister Eos. She was the goddess of the dawn, dude. Duh.

Selene is most famous for pulling some dude called Endymion. Endymion was a shepherd and the moon fell in love with him one night as she looked down at him tending his sheep on Mount Latmos. What? No, I don't know where that is, shuddup. Apparently, she kissed him whilst he rested in a cave each night and he fell asleep. Apparently, he was H-O-T in an Olympian kinda way.

Anyhow, this went on for a while. Each night Selene would visit her lover and kiss him to sleep. I guess they probably did more than that, cos at some point, they had 50 daughters. Anyhow, Selene fell in love with Endymion, like madly in love, and went to see Zeus to ask if he could decide his own fate. No, I'm not too sure what that means either, but I think its all to do with destiny and being able to make your own choices. I think the Greeks were suckers for fate and being controlled by Gods. I guess Selene loved him enough that she wanted him to be free to choose to be with her, not cos it was preplanned.

Anyhow, Zeus, was like, Yeah ok whatever, and so Endymion was like, Sweet! Well, I guess I'll duck out now while things are good and I'm not cursed or anything so I'll choose to stay beautiful and sleep forever, and Selene was like, Fukk. So, every night, broken hearted, she still visits him in the cave on Mount Latmos, where she tends his sheep and kisses her dreaming, ageless lover and probably will do forever. Or til she gets bored.

What? Fukk yous, you got no romance inya. Look, we made it to Chippy Chips. Lets get a fukkin kebab...

Home: It used to be that most of the most important places in my life fitted on a straight line, running from the edge of Freemantle, up over the Avenue and down Lodge Road on the other side. It wasn't an exact line of course, but it was close enough. At one end, was the punk house with paper thin walls that I shared with three other kids. It was here that I briefly encountered the perfect mate. We never fought, never got in each others way, never bitched about each other or had to clean up each others mess – never even saw each other, except for when he'd come in at 4am and find me passed out and dribbling on the sofa. Or when I would be wandering around the empty house in just my sweaty, holey boxers in which case his girl friend would surely magically appear. When he moved out after six months or so of half living here, he left half his records. Perfect house mate. (Get in touch, dude, I still got 'em!)

The other end of the line was book ended by Nico's house down in Mount Pleasant. Nico, Luke, Harry and Pipe were living in a house pretty much without a single right angle. Looking back, it's a feat of architectural wonder that the building was still standing. I was sure that there must have been some law or other in physics once that dictated that the structural support necessary to hold up a building was reliant on the strength of a 90 degree corner. Added to this mix was an intrusive landlord, his shack for locking up bikes and a straight edge stickered beer bong that existed in several incarnations, each ultimately producing the same effect. I would wake up mostly naked on the sofa some Sunday mornings and do the washing up to atone for the night before.

I also got tattooed here, a lot.

Issac, Wayne and the Brightwater Inn shared the good side of the Avenue with me, whilst Jim, Wes, and the Tesco Express that did cheap donuts shared the other. Shirley had Lidl, The Valley had Aldi. We had homebrew, they had the best way to neck it. Both sides had their fair share of drama and insanity back in the halcyon days before I got a proper job and mornings were the time of night I went to bed.

I'd take you on a guided tour of my life circa the recent past, but your smashed and I'm bored as shit of writing as if I'm

talking to you. After 5 years of studying English on and off, I'm still not sure if this is the second person or not, but in any case, it's not like I'm Chuck fukkin Palahnuik or anything, so I'm going back out on my own. I think it's better that way, anyhow, I got quite moody a few days ago when I walked past the Winston. Wayne used to live next door and we couldn't drink there because one of his house mates had chucked a bottle at a parked car and there was an uneasy truce he didn't want to upset. It got me thinking, I wonder who lives in that house now? And that got me thinking of all the shitty, smashed up houses that other people are living in now and how quickly things move on and all the ghosts of punk kids and dumb ideas left behind. What? Oh there's a bottle of whiskey, ice in the freezer, the last Johnny Cash CD and zine box. Yours to play with. Yeah I know we just got in, I'll be back in a bit...

...Time passes...

...Ok, I lied. Kinda. I'm still talking to you, but I'm not the me in the column but the me writing the column and you're not the you who can't hold their whiskey but the you who is sat some place wondering what the fukk this crap about Greek myths and nostalgia is all about. In truth, it's not really about anything much. You see, the beauty of writing fiction is that you're in control. You make the facts up so of course they fit the narrative or message you're trying to convey. But, I'm not meant to be writing fiction, even though this is kinda fictional, cos this is meant to be about me. A bit like a diary. I'm not meant to lie too much. And, even though I'm pretentious enough to think that you're interested in reading this, for the most part, real life is a bunch of events and random stories that don't tie together with easy maxims or high drama. Sorry.

There ARE a few water tight endings I came up with though if ya need closure. If I was Neil Gaiman, I'd have me wondering through snowy, maze-like streets all night. It helps to imagine this as a comic book by the way. The moon, who of course, would be the beautiful Goddess of Greek mythology, would take pity on me and come to me as I sprawled out, face down trying to pass out on the picnic table next to the paddling pool. She'd kiss me, and I'd fall asleep. This is the low fantasy ending.

If I was H.P. Lovecraft, I'd have me wondering through snowy, maze-like streets all night. At some point, I'd find the university library, and hide myself away for the night in the special collections, where I get bored and check out some book written in Greek and bound in human skin. Of course, they find me the next day, an insane, dribbling mess of a man, terrified of the night sky and ancient moon gods beyond human comprehension. This is the cosmic terror ending.

If I was Charles Bukowski, I'd have me

wondering through snowy, maze-like streets all night. Then I'd just go to a bar and get laid. This is the dirty old man ending and I'm kinda warming to it.

But the actual, real life ending is this. I walk for a bit. It's a full moon, there's no cloud cover and it's cold. I catch the last orders at the Co-op, and go home. You're asleep in the arm chair and, bummed out and alone, I drink until I pass out. No big dramatic end. No deep and meaningfuls. No closure, no progress, no sleazy sex, deities or bar fights. Just walking around pissed up and melancholy again waiting for the spring to come. What else did you fukkin expect?

Write to me: Phil c/o Suspect Device, P.O. Box 295, Southampton, SO17 1LW. I do a personal zine, Facial Disobedience. Issue 3 is out, its 30p & a SAE. Cheers.



"Ho! Tally Fucking Ho! Ho! Blair's complete cock-up on the hunting bill gives us an unparalleled opportunity to bring class warfare back onto the streets in the run up to the General Election. The simple tactic will be to make Citizens Arrests on the hunters on February 19th when hunters are set to defy the ban on foxhunting. After years of them using the law to further their class interests now the boot will be on the other foot. We can oppose the Countryside Alliance whenever they show their faces up till Feb 19th but let's make that day the day for action against the fuckers all over the country. And let's be clear from the start - this is not just about animal welfare - it's also about class warfare making a long overdue return to centre stage. Remember 'reasonable force allowed'!!" - "Toffbusters"

Somewhere in the last couple of months, I had a complete wakeup call. I attribute the majority of this (admittedly not all of it, but the majority) to the above paragraph. As you're all probably aware, hunting with foxes becomes illegal on February 18th (although this may be changed due to legal procrastinations), yet the hunters (the crazy cats) have vowed to defy the ban and continue hunting. Hence, in response, a motley crew of hunt saboteurs, animal rights activists and self-proclaimed "anarchists" have launched "Toffbusters", with the intent of supporting the ban's maintenance and aiding the cops in arresting hunters. When I heard about this I could hardly believe my ears. Apparently now the anarchist thing to do is support state bans and enforce national law. Of course, this is absolutely contradictory to anarchism (which stands for no imposed authority

on anyone else), but hey, that's OK cos it's "class warfare". Against whom exactly?? The stereotypical fox hunter is aristocratic, and anyone who's done more than read the back of a Marx book would know that it's the bourgeoisie he has a problem with, not the aristocracy. That is, the dudes who own the factories and businesses, not the stately manor. The aristocracy represent and outdated and disenfranchised relic of old-fashioned British society that no one from any class really cares about anymore. So it's about as far removed from class warfare as animal rights in general.

Of course, that the fox hunting issue is just about the least important debate to happen in the last 7 years won't deter the hysteria that's evident on both sides. The pro-hunt lobby seem determined to bring down the government down (or at least stamp their feet inside the Commons for a good few years) while the hunt saboteurs still seem intent on "sabotaging" hunts and now performing Citizen's Arrests. Apparently "activists"/ revolutionaries no longer choose which issues they're gonna fight; they let the government choose for them. The ban has been proposed, debated and counter-debated on and off at various points since Blair first came to power in 1997. Oddly enough, the periods of intense activity towards the ban have coincided with other more important political events, which, obviously, have passed by largely unnoticed. The most recent example of this is the week in which Otis Ferry stormed Commons, coalition deployments in Iraq led to over 100 civilian deaths. Obviously, all we remember from that week is the infamous picture of that singer from Roxy Music's son marching round Parliament screaming kinda like Rick from The Young Ones. Which is pretty neat for the government really. The foxhunting debate is a great example of how easy it is for a government to manipulate both the media and their electorate. The tactic's called smokescreening, in case you're interested. Hopefully you can be more independent-minded and less gullible than hunt saboteurs.

I, like many of you, will be in Gleneagles this July to protest against the G8. If you go, please bear this in mind: The Group of 8 Meeting is a spectacle; a circus stage-managed for the media and electorate in order to portray their leaders as benevolent, caring and informal. Of course, nothing is actually really discussed during the meetings - a few token "action plans" are wheeled out directly afterwards, but most of them had been decided months before. Because of the lack of substance to the event, the meeting itself has very little relevance to global capitalism and exploitation it inherently wreaks upon billions of people worldwide. This distance is deliberate, another smokescreen with which to

distract us from the places in our society where the exploitation is actually occurring i.e. the workplaces and working class communities. The ultimate aim of Dissent (the anti-authoritarian network organising protest) is to shut down the conference. What do those exploited and afflicted by capitalism (OK, fuck it, the working class) have to gain from the G8 not going ahead?? The only possible advantages I can conceive of is a temporary gain in confidence for "anti-capitalists" and a story to tell your kids. Which is fine. But it isn't facilitating revolutionary activity. Some may argue that events like the G8 expose the "anti-capitalist movement" to the world as a whole, but I'm sure that anyone with access to a newspaper after the Genoa summit in 2001 would realise that that isn't necessarily a good thing. (For those younger than 3, a Telegraph journalist managed to infiltrate London anarchist group, the WOMBLES, in the months leading up to the summit and travelled to Genoa with them. He then wrote a less than flattering "expose" for the Telegraph.)

There's a more important point to be made here though. The negative effects of capitalism are all around us in the most mundane things, such as your job, the shitty local transport, your rent/mortgage being too high to survive etc etc. By throwing all our horsepower into opposing events like these, we are adding to the concept presented by the leaders and bosses that capitalism is this great, big, glamorous and dynamic party, whereas in reality it's ugly, unfair and very boring. It's about time the anarchist/libertarian communist movement started relating to those it claims to wanna liberate, and if you don't believe that's the working class, then you're of very little use. We need to get involved in bread and butter issues that concern people on a day to day basis, and quit focusing all our energy on abstract spectacles like the G8. Our concerns should be the concerns of ordinary people every day of their lives, the problems they see in their localities and complain to their neighbours about.

Right now, my group (Colchester Anarchist Group) is heavily involved in a local campaign to prevent our bus station being closed down to make way for an arts facility, and then luxury flats and expensive shops. People are actually concerned about it, cos local transport's an important issue for more or less everyone (even drivers - cos they have to share the road with gridlocked buses that will result from a closed bus station) and so far the campaign's amassed upwards of 6,000 signatures and almost blanket support from people we've talked to. It's a weird feeling, being involved in a popular cause. Of course, in this work-obsessed society, it's equally important to raise issues at your work, whether they be discussing company policy with colleagues or just working to present the libertarian socialist viewpoint from inside

your union. Mobilising a strong union willing to act in your interests is far more important and beneficial to "the cause" than spectacular street carnivals, despite their limitations. Bear in mind a union is a specifically pro-working class organisation.

So...why am I going to Gleneagles then if I dislike it so much?? Well firstly, I don't, I just wanna temper the obsessive nature of "anarchists" with summits. Secondly, I'm going, cos the alternative seems much worse: of politicians having a sickly sweet and nauseating smug meeting in buttoned down shirts and throwing a few placebos out to the press seems awful. At least this way, there's a possibility that the protests will overshadow the event and thus fuck up their plans for global capitalism's version of a Hugh Hefner pool party. Plus, I've never been to Scotland and I always kinda enjoy squatting.

Ten things I seriously hope happen in hardcore punk in the next 12 months:

#1 Everything's kinda rushed this issue cos I've been working a lot (as a postman, since you ask...albeit only temporary) and I've been busy with the bus station campaign and various other things.

#2 Less bands singing about straight edge (I don't wanna throw a cat among the pigeons here, but it's kinda been done).

#3 More bands sounding like Bad Brains (RESTLESS YOUTH!!!) and Dead Kennedys and hardcore continuing to defy the time-space continuum by awesomely careering backwards towards the late 1970s without giving a fuck.

#4 Less bands sounding like the dodgy metal band you were in when you were 14 and had dreadlocks.

#5 More kids realising it's hardcore PUNK and acting appropriately.

#6 Less line dancing at shows and more kids just going wild and breaking themselves.

#7 The banishing to the past of the odious and utterly meaningless phrase "old skool hardcore".

#8 More Bad Brains covers (highlight of 2004 = Dead Stop doing "Right Brigade").

#9 Righteous Jams, Career Suicide/Fucked Up and Down to Nothing tours to do justice to each band's remarkable capacities. (Down to Nothing/On Thin Ice + more @ Colchester YMCA Activity Hall [venue TBC], 8/6/05 - details to follow.)

#10 Each and every one of you to drag your asses along to Colchester hardcore and give us all a hand cos we work our asses off for scant reward in order to see the bands we fucking love play the town we live in. trust me, a good hardcore punk show is something amazingly special but it needs YOUR input and time to make it truly worthwhile.

ALAN CALLS OUT RANCID NEWS #2
I should make this into a regular feature. Looks like I might have to, although this

one is very short due to time constraints. Jerry Vlasak is both a nutter and a fuckin prick. He shows the "animal liberation" (sic) movement for what it really is: mostly crazy and intensely reactionary types using provocative imagery (such as bloodstained bunnies) to guilt trip and con people into supporting their, ultimately, unimportant causes. Yeah I know, I'm generalising. You guys have my email yo. Fortunately, anarchism has nothing to do with this asshole (or at least the anarcho-communism I subscribe to). RN would have reached a new low by interviewing (and therefore implicitly supporting) him, but that same issue had people encouraging you to watch porn, followed by awful justifications involving bullshit and irrelevant concepts such as "utilitarianism" (didn't Dickens disprove that like 150 years ago??). Jesus. Ah well...I guess I kinda relish being the guy who checks everyone and here I'm kinda naturally sinking into it.

CLOSING POINTS:

#1 Everything's kinda rushed this issue cos I've been working a lot (as a postman, since you ask...albeit only temporary) and I've been busy with the bus station campaign and various other things.

Email me at show_me_magic@yahoo.com with your criticisms or if you don't get what I was trying to say or something.

#2 My Christmas sucked, before you ask. Seriously, I was ill and watched The Wall. Which was well good cos it had nothing to do with Christmas and was just as morbid and grumpy as me.

#3 Corey Internal Affairs is a bit of a jackass for some of the things he said in the interview this issue, although he was actually a pretty nice guy and the interview doesn't catch his well-intentioned sincerity very well, which is something PC punks often have a problem with understanding. Also, bare in mind that he's a "real" person (that is, outside of the activist ghetto) and thus you can't completely judge him by your own self-righteous standards. Moderate your criticisms of him if you want to avoid falling into the traps he fell into. Oh and Edd, they sound FUCK ALL like Terror. Are you on crack or something??

#4 If you wanna play a DIY show in Colchester, get in touch at burnthediscotheque@hotmail.com about sending a demo. We'll consider anything within reason, as long as it's kinda good. We're most interested in hearing from bands in Essex/Suffolk area.

#5 My band, Sweet Zombie Jesus (name soon to be changed) are bringing out a demo of hardcore/metal crossover type thing along the lines of Sick of it All, Superjoint Ritual, Converge, Dukes of Nothing etc. Interested?? Get in touch. We need shows like fuck.

#6 Current choons: Void/Faith LP, Dead Prez (still), Warzone, 20 Years of Dischord (first CD only...then it goes a bit shit), The Wrong Side, new Dizzee Rascal, Restless Youth, The Ramones. #7 Buy "American Hardcore". Seriously.

GAWKRODGER SKATE THE STATE.

Lets make 2005 a bad year for being a fascist!

As we enter 2005 fascists are still increasing in strength, and anti-fascist/racist opposition is largely unorganised or concentrated in the highly inefficient SWP front group Unite Against Fascism. However there is one growing organisation which aims to change this situation. I give you Antifa:

'Antifa is a collective of militant anti-fascists committed to opposing the rise of the far-right in Britain and abroad. We believe in the 'no platform' philosophy and the tradition of fighting fascism/racism stretching back to Cable Street, Red Lion Square, Lewisham, and Waterloo.

We are a network of various organisations and individuals who see anti-fascism as part of the class struggle. After decades of under performing, the far-right now poses a significant threat politically.

This initiative aims to bring together those who wish to act rather than talk. We aim to oppose the far-right's electoral politics and where possible by means of direct action. As well as street activities we aim to promote militant anti-fascism in the football and music areas. This website will serve as an information and activity site, we will post up any intelligence on far-right activities and invite other anti-fascists to join us in counter activities. The 'Antifa' initiative has come from members of the Anarchist Federation, Class War Federation, and No Platform. Although we come from the anarchist tradition we are open to work with any group/individual that is serious about militant anti-fascism, but we will NOT work with any state affiliated groups. If you are interested in getting involved then please contact us.'

E-mail: info@antifa.org.uk

Website: <http://www.antifa.org.uk>

Post: c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London. E1 7QX

Now one for all the Nerds

Top Ten Records of 2004

Immortal Technique – Revolutionary Volume Vol. 2 (Viper Records)

Fucking excellent revolutionary, CLASS STRUGGLE hip-hop. When you've got rhymes like 'mothers are trying to feed children/but gentrification is kicking them out of their buildings/a generation of babies born without healthcare/families homeless thrown the fuck off the welfareyou can't raise a family on minimum wage/why the fuck do you think most of us are locked in a cage?' Harlem Streets you know you're off to a good start. Even with some of the weak, and at some points very commercial sounding beats,

and the shit track that is 'Obnoxious' this still slays.

Yaphet Kotto – We Bury Our Dead Alive (Ebullition)

No one else seems to like this, the third LP from Yaphet Kotto. Oh well. Great hardcore on the best label. A lot less 'emo' than the previous LPs

Circle Takes The Square – As The Roots Undo (Robotic Empire)

When this first came out I thought it was bollocks. However it has really grown on me since, a process no doubt helped by seeing them in a field with views across towards Wales! Will be interesting to see where they go from here.

Nina Nastasia – Dogs (Touch and Go) Strictly speaking this shouldn't be in here but as when it was released in 1999 it was hella hard to get and as it's my list it's going in. Absolutely amazing alt-American. Her songs are amazingly beautiful. If he excites you Steve Albini reckons this is the best LP ever!

Foreign Beggars – Asylum Speakers (Dented Records)

Really good UK Hip-hop with a strong political slant.

Mastodon – Leviathan (Relapse)

Amazingly good metal. Overall, not quite as good as Remission, but still 100 times better than most of the whack records put out last year.

The South – Pacific EP (Dead Tank)

Whilst strictly not an LP it's my list so I'll put in what I want.

I love this band. In my eyes one of the best hardcore bands of the last decade. Hell, the second track 'Boxing for Courbet' is one of the best Hardcore songs ever! I wish so much that they'd come over before they split.

Bjork – Medulla (Some Major record label)

Her fifth proper album, with most instruments removed and instead made up of layers upon layers of processed vocal parts! I was slightly disappointed by this because, perhaps unsurprisingly, on some tracks it just doesn't work and I hoped it would be completely comprised of vocals. However there are still a bunch of top songs and anything this original deserves to be praised!

Life At These Speeds – S/T (Perpetual Motion Machine)

Really fucking good emo-hardcore. Can't say anything more than this!

Taskforce – MFTC 3 (Self Released)

I know a lot of people who aren't impressed with this but I think it's great, as good as the Great Outdoors EP. Top UK hip-hop

Recommended

Prince Po – The Slickness

Off Minor – Innonimate

Takaru – There is only none

Shackle Me Not – demo

Rammer – Suffer

Klashnekoff – Sagas of...

Funeral Diner/Dead City

Ampere – All Our Tomorrows end today

The Holy Mountain – Bloodstains Across Your Face

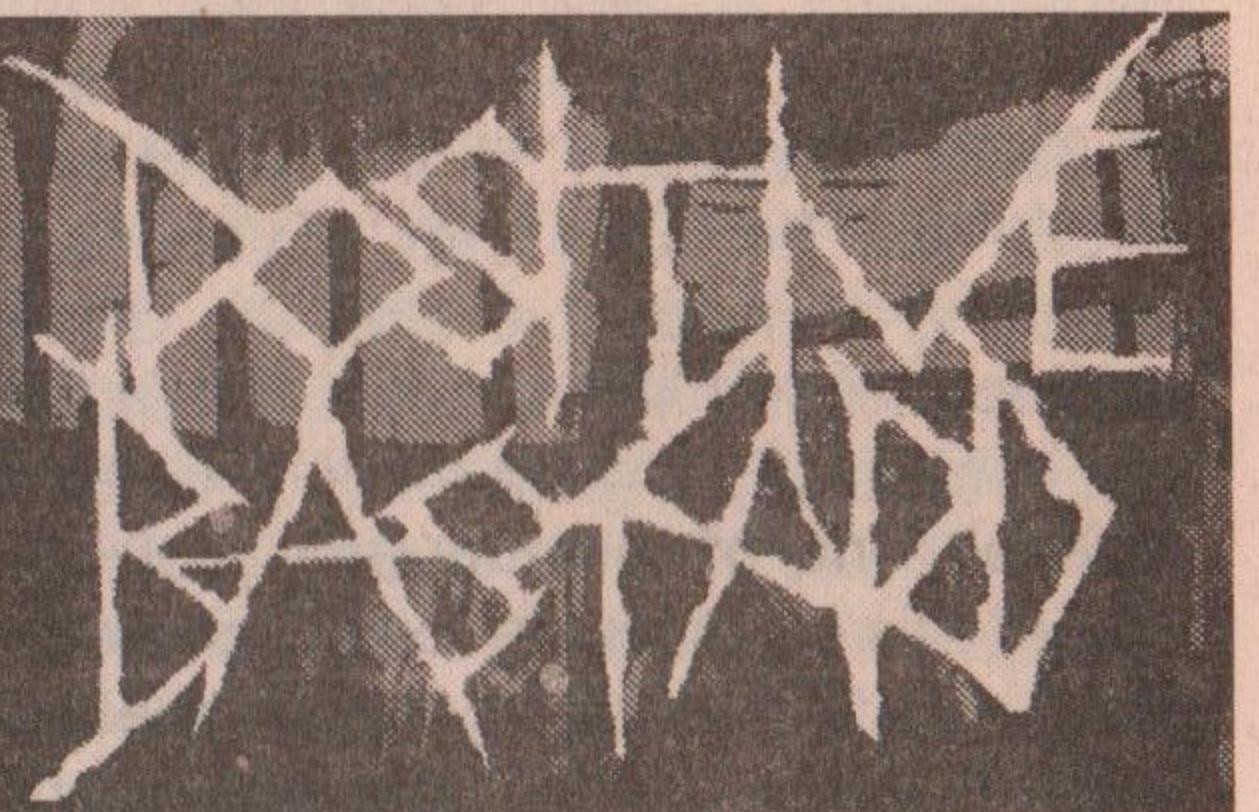
True if Destroyed – S/T.

Sabac – Sabacolypse

Skinnyman – Council Estate of Mind

Anarchist Federation

www.afed.org.uk



Bizzare moments in modern Russian History

During my time at school and university I got to study a lot in regards to Russia and the Soviet Union. I have always been fascinated by her vast lands, and I am sure many of you know some of the more famous moments in Russian history such as the 1917 Revolution, Joseph Stalin's reign of terror and the fall of communism. Now that I am currently outside of academia I thought I would take the time to write about and share some of the more bizarre and strange moments that I have discovered in her past.

Drunken tales of Boris Yeltsin

Regarded by many as the man who put the final nail in the coffin of Soviet communism. The life of Boris Yeltsin has many moments that will certainly raise a smile. During his time in power he was widely known as a big abuser of alcohol, something that many a waterintobear reader would relate to, but nowhere on the scale of Boris. Let me take you back to his early years, to show that alcohol was even a part of his life before it was possible for him to hit the bottle.

Christenings in Boris' home district of Sverdlovsk took place once a month, which is a fairly common occurrence in most Christian areas of the world. The service was done in alphabetical order, and the procedure involved immersing the young baby in a tub of water. The common custom in Russian villages was to offer the priest a shot of vodka or glass of wine for christening the little one. So, by the time it was Mr. Yeltsin's turn, the priest is so drunk he can hardly stand up. The priest puts Boris in the tub and then starts arguing with a member of the congregation, and forgets all about him.

It's only when his parents realise what is going on, storming up to the stage, when Boris is rescued out of the water. The priest turns round and realises, pronouncing, "Well if he can survive such an ordeal then he's good tough lad...and

I name him Boris". It seems that alcohol was destined to be something that will surround him for the rest of his life.

It wasn't until he was in his 50's, and his election as head of the Russian state that Boris really started indulging in alcohol. Its no secret that he was partial to a glass of Russia's finest. During many visits to America it is rumored that despite going to the toilet in the terminal he was so drunk that he couldn't wait to board the plane, so decided to go to the toilet on the runways. Also, during a ceremony that accompanied the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Berlin he drank enough champagne to 'borrow' the baton from the conductor of the Russian army orchestra and engage in a bit of impromptu conducting.

However, one of the funniest drunken moments as Russian leader came when he was due to make a stop-over meeting with the Irish president at Shannon airport, on his way back from the USA. After an embarrassing 15 minute wait his aides emerged from the plane to apologise to the Irish premiere. They told him that Boris was ill, yet when he returned to Moscow he told the press that his aides didn't wake him up. Generally though the common consensus is that he was too drunk to get off the plane. Talk about a disaster in foreign diplomacy! This nearly reached rock bottom after declaring the war in Yugoslavia to be the start of World War Three.

Whatever you think of the man himself, he has put smiles on peoples faces worldwide through his drunken antics, as well as cause some horrific moments in foreign and domestic diplomacy. I would like to make a final point and say that he wasn't a serial alcoholic and these moments only mark a small part of his distinguished life in which he has done a lot to help the Russians quality of life.

Lavrenty Beria and the purge of Spartak Moscow Football Club

Football was introduced into the Soviet Union by British people who studied and worked there. It was first brought into Russian life by Englishman, Harry Charnock, who introduced it to the workers in the Morozov mills. This was an attempt to woo them away from vodka drinking on Sundays, their only day off (cf. trying to make workers more efficient on Mondays).

During the birth of professional football in the 1930's, the best teams were Dinamo Moscow (the government sponsored team) and Spartak Moscow (the industrial sponsored team); the rivalry was huge. At the height of the Spanish civil war, an all-star team of professional Basque players drawn from top teams, came to Russia to raise money for the Republican cause. After a dozen matches in a dozen days, fatigue kicked in and it was Spartak who became the first Soviet team to beat a foreign

professional team, ever. This honour had gone to Spartak and not Dinamo; this did not go down well with Dinamo's new president, Lavrenty Beria, Stalin's chief of Secret Police!

The following year, Spartak defeated Beria's favourite team, Dinamo Tbilisi, on a disputed goal in the semi-final of the cup. Two weeks later, Spartak won the cup against the Stalinets of Leningrad in front of 70,000 fans. Almost immediately the Party Central Committee ordered Spartak to replay the SEMI-final against Dinamo Tbilisi. This was the first semi-final in football history to take place after the final. What crazy mentality! Spartak won 3-2 and managed to keep the cup. The consequences were harsh, the head of Spartak's sponsors, many Politburo members associated with Spartak and some of the teams best players were sent to forced labour camps, and were only released after Stalins death in 1955.

As you can gather the sphere of influence and control from the Communist party managed to infiltrate sporting activities such as football. The whole mentality of replaying a semi-final, and the following purge of Spartak Moscow goes to show how messed up the Soviet mentality was during the years under Communism. Lets not go into the USSR's forced sporting camps or the 1944 match of death, it just gets stranger.

Mattias Rust and the descent on Red Square

Without a doubt, this story of one man who broke through the Iron Curtain and single handedly made his way to Red Square, goes down as one of the most bizarre and courageous moments in modern Russian history. Planned as a peace mission to ease tensions between East and West during the Cold War, 19 year old Mattias Rust, began his plight to Russia's capital. In 1989 he took his light aircraft, set off solo, from Berlin via Helsinki and entered Russian air space without permission.

Of all days to choose, it was the National holiday and celebration of the Russian air force. Hence none of the border guards were able to stop him entering and by the time he was there, the Russians were unable to shoot him down (non-military aircrafts were not allowed to be shot down, since the shooting down of a South Korean Boeing in 1983). After his epic flight he finally arrived in Moscow.

He wanted to land in the Kremlin, but there wasn't enough space. He wanted somewhere public, so he tried to land in Red Square but was unable to do so without causing civilian casualties. In the end he landed on a bridge by Red Square. He was immediately arrested and he spent four years in a labour camp where he was kept in an interrogation cell to guarantee his safety. After his release he was sent back to Germany having done his time.

Described by Russian propaganda

newspaper Pravda as an 'air hooligan'. Rust single handedly shattered the illusion that Russia was invincible, something that the Americans had been trying to achieve for 40 years but always failed. This was a great achievement in itself. What really does it for me, is the fact that a 19 year old pilot decides to fly a light aircraft into the worlds biggest superpower, and lands in the heartland of the capital, Red Square, all in the name of peace. The insane actions of Mattias Rust command the greatest respect and his brave adventure must go down as one of the most bizarre moments in modern Russian History.

Thanks for reading, and Nastarova!

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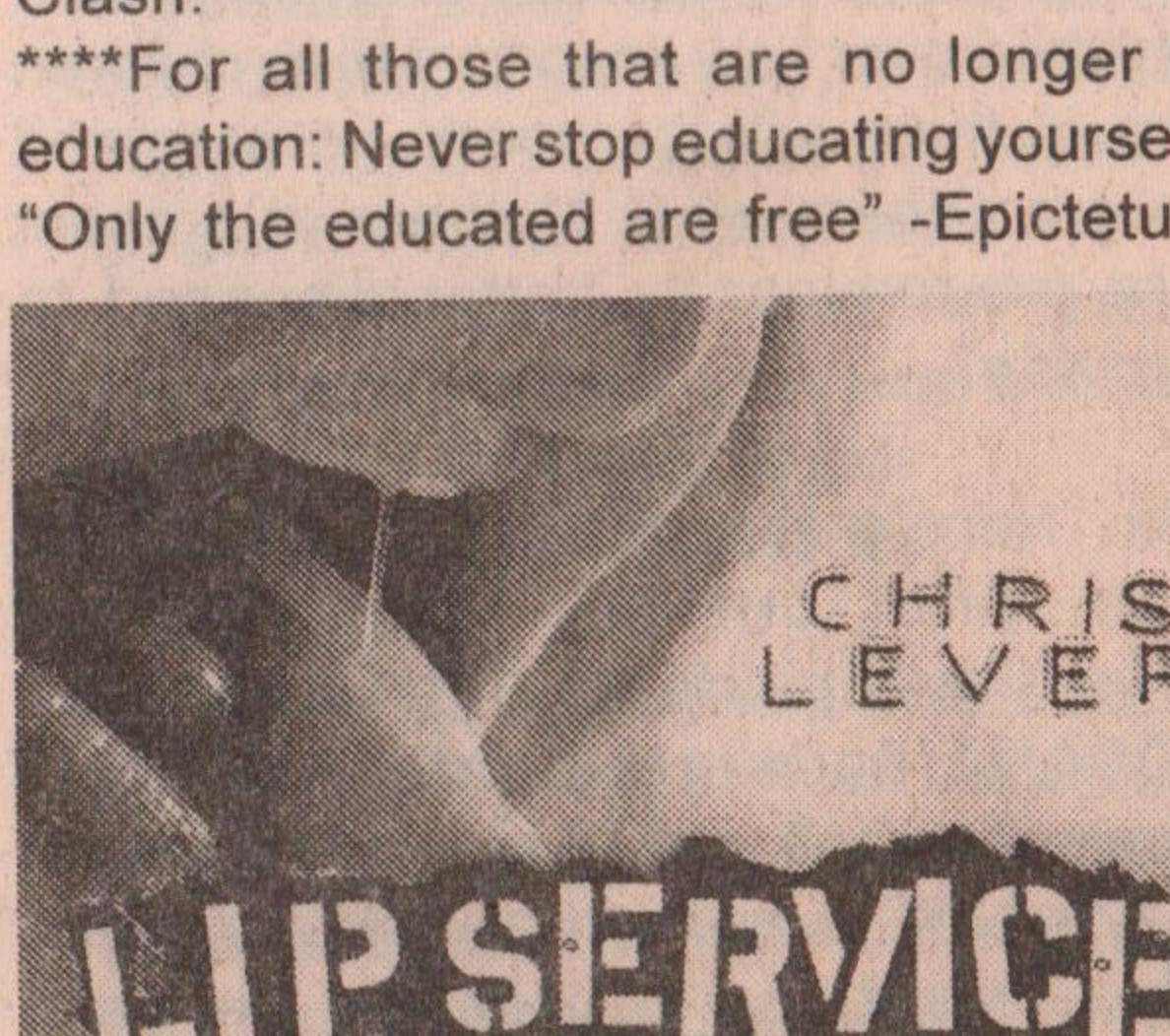
Endnotes

*waterintobear fanzine #10 is out now, and its jam packed with 80 pages. Interviews with This Aint Vegas, Endstand and xAnd-None-Of-Them-Knew-They-Were-Scenesersx. Tour Reports of Hero Dishonest in Russia, and Same Day Service in the UK. As well as the huge array of articles and reviews. Available for £1 + SAE to Tim Livesey, 48 West Park Grove, Leeds, LS8 2DY. waterintobear@hotmail.com

**waterintobear #11 out by the end of January, 40 pages, 50p, back to the old school and more regular (we hope).

***Listening to: Hero Dishonest, Out Cold, Snowblood, Easpa Measa, Fig 4, I Adapt, Bad Religion, Unkind, Humanly, I walk the line, Doom, Kriegstanz, Umlaut, Endstand, Madball, Iron Maiden, Fun, Leatherface, Phoenix Foundation, Skitsystem, The Clash.

****For all those that are no longer in education: Never stop educating yourself! "Only the educated are free" -Epictetus.



Fathers 4 Injustice: Part-Time Property Disputes in the Dawn of a 'New Father' I very rarely watch television...or 'the opiate of the masses' as I affectionately call it from time to time. However, if my memory serves me correctly, on those fleeting occasions upon which I do decide to watch a specific program the

ensuing come-down rapidly degenerates into a rather torrid argument with my housemates. After being treated to a screening of Bob Geldof's 'bigoted views from the male moral right part two' or 'Geldof on Fatherhood' as the BBC decided to call it, I was somewhat keen to see what the Beeb's own investigatrix extraordinaire Fiona Bruce had to say in response to his largely rhetorical digs at the current state of child custody law on the 'Real Story' show some weeks later. Whilst I correctly anticipated the biased battleground upon which the loose lipped Geldof, and the seemingly neutral Bruce fought vehemently, the polarised rhetoric strewn across the floor of the arena by both teams brought one realisation hurtling rapidly before my eyes: I have no time for Fathers 4 Justice! Their definition of Justice is misplaced, their reluctance to considerations of change is selfish and the methods by which they seek to regain ownership of their chattels (read children) as a *right* is utterly deplorable, as I'm about to show you, and hopefully we can have a little fun along the way? For the record, I'm not acknowledging that occasionally, fathers get a raw deal from the family courts; the majority of cases granting residence to mothers and visitation to the fathers. However, this is the inevitable outcome of a gendered society which Fathers, more often than not are guilty of perpetuating; irrespective of their ability to parent, having built their patriarchal monoliths so high that they have posited themselves far out of reach of their children. The case law under the Children Act 1989 holds that the best interests of the child are of paramount importance in deciding with which parent custody is best placed, and until 'Fathers 4 Justice' become 'Fathers 4 Change' the natural role of motherhood they have so deeply entrenched within society will only serve against them. Until women are paid as equals in contradistinction to their male colleagues, until fathers sacrifice their careers to invest more than a stolen hour or two between bath time and bed time with their children and until Fathers recognise how important they are to their children over how important their children are to them will the courts be prepared to grant them what Mothers at present are predominantly better disposed to provide.

Ok, here's the fun bit, grab a red pen...print out this article [<http://www.the-flipside.co.uk/f4jliverpool/2004/11/dads-get-beaten-up-over-domestic.php>] and I'll give you a lesson in how NOT to make a plausible argument. Now I want you to underline the valid points Matthew O'Connor, founder of Fathers For Justice makes....right, any advances on 0? I thought not. How about tenuous arguments? Ok, I'll accept that domestic violence can be directed at men as well as women, but I struggled to find anything more than that; and I'll welcome any advances you may have on my offer. How about blasé

statements and rhetorical name-calling...wow, you're right, the list's gone through the roof! What's your favourite? It was a close call between 'barking broomstick flying fanatical feminists' and 'The Al Quaeda of womankind' for me, the latter just about pipping the former to the ignorance post. Bonus points to anyone who also noticed the claim that fathers are even more discriminated against than gays, blacks and Jews. Before we even begin to examine the arguments Fathers 4 Justice purport it's important to note that encapsulating them in macho idiom and childish name-calling is going to do you little favours, unless you read the Daily Mail. Furthermore for every slam against the mothers, the courts and the biased critique of Ms Bruce they fail to see the extent to which they are mirroring their own guilt, lodging a formal complaint with the BBC at a program that was arguably less biased against their plight than Geldof's was in support of it. Come on lads, let's play fair...you should be pushing the prams, not throwing your toys out of them!

Do you not find it odd that an organisation as novel as the 'new fathers' behind it has gained such a phenomenal level of support in no time at all...or does the touch paper burn quicker when it threatens the patriarchal status quo? Lest we not forget that feminism remained a subversive undercurrent for many a decade, slowly clawing at it's independence, only to be spat in the face and called family terrorists by an aged 'rock star' and a battalion of 'too little, too late' thugs, kicking up a ruckus in a matter of months? Matt O'Connor may try his hardest to portray his band of brigands as innocent victims - I recently got beaten up verbally by newsreader Fiona Bruce over the issue of domestic violence in an interview. What I learnt from my hammering, etc' (emphasis added) - he refuses to refute the claim that he's harbouring violent men amidst his ranks ('we are a cross-section of society. We probably have the good the bad and the ugly. We can't do criminal record checks'). However, in reliance on O'Connor's own wholly unreasonable defence that you have to endure the good, the bad and the ugly in any cross-section of society to expose it's inherent ills I find it hard to see on what basis he can justify launching an attack on Mothers who raise domestic abuse issues in court. O'Connor claims that changes in the law requesting that issues of domestic abuse by both parties be discussed before going to court are open to abuse by Mothers seeking to exact revenge on the estranged partners. However, is this malicious female element not another inevitable minority faction of any 'cross-section of society'? Would it not be better to impose a presumption of openness (not a presumption of guilt as Fathers 4 Justice have wrongfully inferred) in considering issues of domestic violence before the family courts? 1 in 4 women

are subject to domestic abuse at some point in their life, and this needs to be discussed before the courts, which has long adopted methods of conciliation and mediation that have sought to sweep such considerations under the carpet for the sake of quicker case resolutions.

The same argument rears its unreasonable head again in O'Connor's claim that mothers are failing their children *en masse* in refusing to uphold court-imposed contact arrangements. However, figures suggest that the number of mothers withholding access is far lower than Fathers 4 Justice suggests: only 2% of separated fathers return to court because their ex-partner has frustrated a contact order. 2%? Surely this is another case for Mr O'Connor's 'cross-section of society' defence?

Fathers 4 Justice claim that there should be a presumption of contact in favour of both parents post divorce, and to be honest I couldn't agree more so. The law at present, and it's welfare discourse maintains that contact from both parents is an essential player in a child's upbringing. Such a presumption however should be reciprocal, not only to take account of the needs of all these 'new fathers' but to enforce legal responsibilities on all the shitbags who chose to have no further contact with their children themselves, holding them up against the shining examples of the 21st Century Father. In reality however, the modern father is yet to be seen, and whilst many post-divorce dad's show a keen interest in maintaining contact with their kids this more often than not dwindles once his affections are relocated within the nucleus of another family relationship.

In reality the 50/50 custodial split Fathers 4 Justice are hell-bent on achieving won't work. Such an argument fails to see that a true 50/50 split already occurs in your nuclear family: one parent works part-time and rears full time, whilst the other rears part-time and work full-time. In essence, by the time the post-divorce parents have worked for their own wage they can only effectively offer their children a 25/25 split, and such considerations fail to account for the empirical gender divide. Is Bob Geldof really committed to fatherhood or does he want to feed to world once again on his LiveAid moral crusade take 2 (though I'm sure he'll tell you the crippling costs of the family courts forced him into it)? We live in an empirically gendered society that has so entrenched the demigoddess of the 'natural' mother that should any woman derogate from her pre-disposed role she will be interrogated before the family courts, yet fathers need only do little more than nothing to be afforded superhuman levels of esteem, as if finally harnessing the ability to hold down a job, microwave one's own meals, keep up the rent on

one's own bedsit and to free-up the time to care for one's children 2 nights a week as well as on Sunday gave him the divine right to do so.

One of the Fathers 4 Justice's most recent stunts involved the storming the Children Law UK Conference near Regent's Canal on the 29th of October, resulting in the evacuation of the building when their purple flares set off the centre's fire alarms. Whilst I'll be the last to entirely condemn the effective use of direct action, the act itself was yet another piece of media-hungry selfishness that served to portray the organisation as the ignorant boneheads they are, and as Glyn Farrow, spokesperson for the conference organisers more aptly stated "It is a shame that seminars such as this which aim to highlight possible improvements to current practice should be disrupted." After all, Children Law UK appreciates the experience of fathers who have been unable to maintain contact with their children. Tactically naïve? I think so!

The protest itself was in retaliation to a claim made by Lord Filkin, the new gov. head of family policy, that some fathers have been too 'wet' in their persistence in seeking contact with their children through the courts after an initial knock-back.

The most intelligent response the non-violent, Fathers 4 Justice could muster was "well, we are beside a canal," said Mr O'Connor. "He could have been in at the deep end."

Further Reading

There's a lot of interesting arguments on the internet if you read between the lines! I'm also in the process of deconstructing the Gov's current Green Paper on 'Parental Separation: Children's Needs and Parent's Responsibilities' if you fancy a chat, or want to posit any concerns/theories.

lipglosszine@hotmail.com

Chris Lever

End Notes

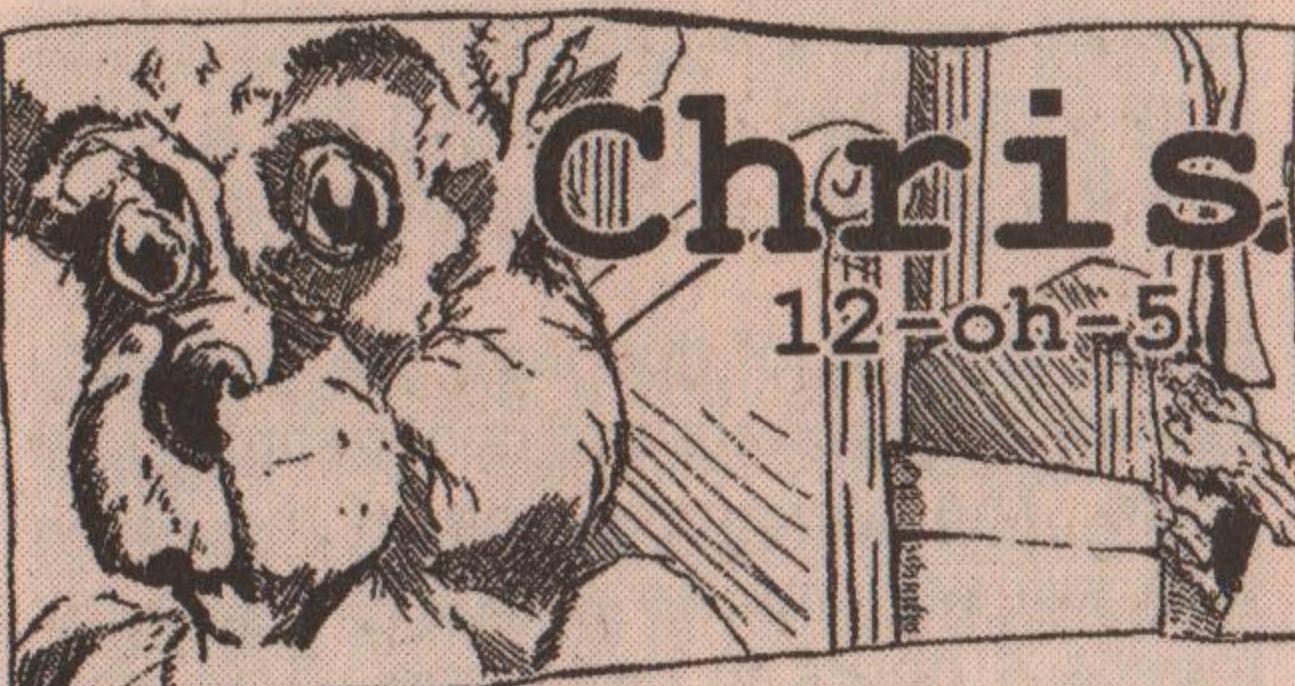
1. Of all the things to become infatuated with of late I've developed an unhealthy obsession with Jam. If anyone knows any decent recipes it'll most probably make my year!

2. Irony is a dead scene: contrary to popular opinion I have not had my column header censored. We collectively came to the conclusion that the irony behind it was never going to be appreciated by more people than those who were offended by it so I decided to change it. Just to prove to you that people just don't get irony these days, have a little look at the review of Rancid news I found in Dirty Dog #7

"Some of it is a waste of time and paper: a 'column' which is a personal ad from some heartbroken guy..."

Sound familiar?

3. Lipgloss is almost ready. Instead of trying to get the first issue done, I decided it wasn't going to be fully ready to get it printed until I'd ironed out all the creases in the five year plan!



I've always felt this way, I spent a lot of time feeling ashamed that I like sex and I love talking about sex. I was also under the impression that sex should be kept firmly behind closed doors, in particular after an incident involving getting busted by the police for having sex in a car...But that's a whole other story. I was helped slightly by the chapter on sex in 'Days of War, Nights of Love', which encouraged me to go have sex in 'public' (a beach, a forest, a city centre- it's as much your own space as your bedroom is. Reclaim it), which I tried and loved. Obviously, it was strange at first, but it adds a totally new dynamic of 'naughtiness' (for lack of a better word) and adrenalin. It also helped to have someone understanding and appreciating me for what I am, without me worrying about my appearance, my skill, or whatever. I'm not writing this because I think you should go out and sleep with everyone you meet in public car parks and shopping centres, although you could take it to that extreme at your own risk. I'm simply trying to put the word 'sex' back into the public debate forum, encourage people to stop seeing it as something that should make you blush, but as something that helps you lose your inhibitions and fully understand yourself. Sex is the most natural thing on earth, whether you're talking self-gratification or enjoyment with a lover, it's time to remember that. Check out www.mythweb.com/encyc/ for some inspiration!

Endnotes: (I only do them to be cool)

* I'm helping The Plague Mass from Austria to book their UK tour in March/April 2005, if you'd like to help, please get in touch with me ASAP, if you haven't yet checked this band out, go to <http://www.theplaguemass.at.tt> and download some tracks. Technical political hardcore/metal at its absolute finest.

* I have eaten approximately 25 pizzas since becoming a student in September. I had about one token annual pizza previously, I'm scared. However, I created a great recipe- (for two people)

- Two cups of Quinoa or Lentils
- Carrots, Baby Sweet Corn, Onions, Garlic (lots), Mushrooms, Chillies, Mange Tout, Peppers, Chopped Tomatoes, root ginger (Amounts to own taste)

- One tbbsp salt, lots of pepper! (Alternatively, use Morrison's Oriental Spice Mix) Two tbbsp sugar
- One giant spoon of honey
- Soy Sauce

****Cook Quinoa/Lentils in a saucepan whilst frying all of the vegetables. Depending on strength of chillies, add some paprika, otherwise add salt, pepper and sugar once the vegetables are beginning to soften. Before adding chopped tomatoes, pour in honey. Add Soy if you like it! It's really as simple as that.

Chris 12-oh-5
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"I wake up; I've been here before. The memories all very clear, As I relive the moment. I wish I'd be out there again. Where it all makes sense. Where friendships are made. If only you knew, how much this means to me" I adapt - 'Where it all makes sense'

Ooh, opening with a quote. Classy. The above words have been rattling around my head for a while now. They're not particularly awe-inspiring, but they're pretty poignant for me and they best sum up my feelings over the last month or so. It's kind of funny... Usually life is anything but predictable, yet over the last few years I've noticed an interesting kind of 'pattern' emerging in my life. It usually goes along the lines of having a rad summer, then having something pretty shit and depressing happen (often to do with relationships or a very evident lack of them) as summer ends, and then around November and Xmas a series of awesome events will occur which will make me more happy than I've felt throughout the year.

This year has certainly been no exception. My granddad dieing whilst I was travelling (and thus unable to attend his funeral and say goodbye) was definitely the worst thing that has happened for a long time, but now is not the time to talk about that...

It seems that once you really involve yourself within the underground punk community (be it through being in a band, label, artist or just a gig goer), you're suddenly opened up to a whole new level of cliquey-ness and elitism. I've certainly been guilty of this myself (hell, I probably still am), but it's amazing how incredibly boring (not to mention disheartening) it becomes hearing about band member's being arseholes, promoters being money grabbing fuckers, which scene is more DIY, etc etc, zzzz.... The wonderful world of internet message boards has only added to this, as people type away about rumours they've heard about certain labels, scenes and so forth. You sometimes wonder if people actually enjoy the music at all...

Anywho, I can't be arsed to waste more space on them, because over the last month or so I've totally had my faith and love of the underground punk scene restored. It all started with Endfest. If you went then you've no doubt been boring people to death with how rad it was. If you didn't go then you've no doubt been bored to death with people telling you how rad it was. I'd heard about how

crazy Guildford shows are, but nothing could have prepared me for the alcohol fuelled, mattress wall-of-death insanity that was to take place, as the likes of the Mingers (who started with an ace Fig 4.0 cover) and Send More Paramedics (people lurching around the pit like extras from thriller had me grinning like a loon) tore the shit out of the youth centre.

Better than all of this was the generally friendly atmosphere and cool people I met there. The awesome vibe of the show was still with me as it took me and my friends 4 hours to get home... This positive vibe stuck around though. I'd forgotten how amazingly happy an awesome gig can make me, and the way this happiness manifests itself in other parts of my life, I felt more confident at uni, I got into a band based in Brighton, and generally felt more relaxed and happy with myself and my decisions.

Recently I had a weekend home where I went to a gig every single night, and each one was brilliant in its own right. Whether it was discovering the metallicsuperawesomeness of Unearth at Eastpak Resistance, to chatting and laughing with all the cool people and friends from all over the country at Suicide Machines, the thing which united all of these was the feeling of warmth and pride I had of being involved in something with so many lovely people, something, which is above all else, so much fun.

The return of the :antimanix: on their winter tour was the icing on the "posicore" cake for me. Words can't really express how amazingly inspiring I find this band, both as musicians and as people. To put it bluntly, I wouldn't be writing in this zine, giving a fuck about politics, be a vegetarian or going to nearly as many underground gigs if it wasn't for them. The first time I saw them a few years ago was one of the most important nights of my life, and seeing them again brought back all that excitement and emotion I felt as I walked home that night to the tube from the Verge, with a handful of political info leaflets and a smile on my face.

Not only did I get to dance, finger point, sing, scream, piggy back and "wall of love" with some of my best friends, I also got the chance to do this with my new friends I'd made over the previous weeks. The force and power music has on me is something I will never take for granted as I even managed to do something I thought I'd never do. I forgave and got over someone who I thought had totally betrayed me, fucked me up and made me miserable. Where once there was a burning resentment, there was now compassion, and I realised (contrary to what some hardcore bands may say) to forgive is not a weakness, but a strength. In the words of American History X, "life is too short to be pissed off all the time", and it's true. The last months events made

me realise that there is so much fantastic music, and so many cool, kinda and interesting people out there, whether they are musicians, label owners, artists, zine writers, distro runners, booking agents or just people with a passion for creativity and expression, that to waste time self-pitying and wallowing is just pointless. We are all so young, and there's so much shit wrong in the world, that to waste our days worrying about the past is an injustice to ourselves... It's time to get on with and enjoy our lives... and if mine has more months like these ones, well, I'm looking forward to it...

Take it easy

+ Mikey +

End notes:

1. I can't name names, but the people who I've met recently, you know how rad you all are, hope you've had as much fun as me!

2. Posi Playlist:

I adapt

Strike Anywhere

Ensign

Bridge to solace

^ anyone who can recommend bands which are the same vein as this please get in touch!



Thinking Syndromes

So far this year I've been kicked in the shin, spat at in the face, told that I smell, had my clothes insulted and been called a 'blabbering animal.' And that's all from someone I like. Someone actually who I enjoy hanging out with.

In fact at the end of last year I met someone very special. Someone who is going to have a big impact on my everyday life for the time being and probably a lasting impression on it for the future. I would even venture to hope that the same is true for this person regarding the effect that I will have on them as well.

You see I've just started a job working as a Learning Support Assistant at a primary school in North London. It's my responsibility to look after a nine year old girl who is part of a mainstream year five class and has special needs. I work closely with her from a quarter to nine in the morning until quarter past three in the afternoon, five days a week. I help her get through the school day in lots of ways that other children her age might not need such as by re-explaining what has been asked, keeping things calm and focused, offering encouragement and generally making sure she is ok. As part of this I also get to work with a class of about 30 pupils within a school of a fair few

hundred kids.

Apart from the initial body shock of having to fall into a regular pattern of getting up early every day (read seven o'clock in the morning - eek!) I think it's going pretty well so far. Admittedly this was a bit of a rude awakening from the slumber encrusted land of studentsville. I don't think the creature that also inhabits my bed which emits a few little protesting groans and pulls the cover tightly over their eyes as I turn on the lights and fire up my hairdryer much appreciates it either. Tough luck though because I'm now in the swing of it and am developing secret plans to turn them into a morning person too. I think they would object noisily if they heard me saying it out loud though!

Early mornings aside the new job is great and just what I needed. The variety that comes with working with children will keep me on my toes and hopefully help when I come to thinking about whether I want to become a proper teacher or not, or even just what to do next in a few years time. Plus there's the warm fuzzy feeling of knowing you are doing something positive and worthwhile that you just can't get in retail or office work.

Coupled with working with kids is the idea that I have to recognize the new role I have placed myself in. It is one of Adult. Whilst it is something I have done before as a volunteer with other children I have always been able to step away from it. Now it is something I do on a regular basis even if I don't feel all that grown up myself. I have to be conscious of the fact that children can often have blind faith in what someone older than them tells them and that I have a responsibility towards them.

On a lighter note I've also had to deal with the feeling of being shown up as the girl with no rhythm or timing in weekly music lessons. In addition I have rediscovered that I have next to none sporting skills for P.E. I still duck away from balls as if they are going to hurt me and find it hard to kick them back to the kids in a straight line. When I took the job I don't think I'd considered the consequences of revisiting classes I used to detest. I don't think much has changed but maybe this time around I'll actually learn something.

The girl I work with is also incredibly interesting in her own right. She is very bright, an excellent drawer, with her own unique style of humour. She also has Asperger's Syndrome which is considered to be part of the autistic spectrum. Her mind works differently to other people and she behaves in ways that might be considered odd. This is because people within the autistic scale have problems imagining how others might feel, interpreting emotions and facial expressions and are often obsessive over particular interests or details. Social interaction is difficult and autistic people

often find it hard to understand what is being asked of them, especially if meanings are not always straight forward or explicit. As well as associated speech, language and learning difficulties those with autism will often experience difficulties just with dealing with the uncertainties, changes and complexities that come with life.

Autism is quite a topical thing at the moment. The rows over vaccination jabs and the general increase in cases that are being identified is part of the reason for this. Mark Haddon has also done his bit for it, having committed his depiction of a teenage boy with autism in his novel 'The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-time' to close to the top of the best sellers list. It's well worth a read, not least for the fact that it will only take you a few hours at most because it is so quick to get through.

Everyone with autism though is different but children with Asperger's syndrome tend to share certain traits, often leading to them being grouped as people with high-functioning autism. This is because of their bright nature and ability to do well in certain academic avenues. In fact many find that their ability to work on meticulous, finely tuned, detailed work makes them well equipped to professions such as computing or programming for example. Nevertheless social situations are still painful experiences. It's part of my job to help the girl I'm working with to learn to deal with these and to help her with her school work.

Disappointingly some people couldn't quite see the need in what I was doing, when I told them excitedly about my new job. I could see their eyes flicker and voice change as they tried to work out why the council should be funding this. One person's salary for just one child I sensed them thinking. Unfortunately it seems not everyone gets the point that education is an entitlement for all. For people at risk of social marginalization I think this is especially pertinent. They deserve as much chance of accessing ideas as anyone else. It was only when I gently suggested the foreseen economic 'benefits' of a 'productive' person versus lifelong unemployment and welfare that some people perked up and conceded that it was okay.

Regrettably some people will always consider those different from themselves as somehow lesser people. Part of our problem is that we still haven't learnt to deal with others, be it whoever they are. Save for a few comments and the occasional moments many of the children at the school show understanding and tolerance that would put many adults to shame.

One of the things I am starting to sense strongly though is how something like Asperger's can even be classified. It's not a disease in the standard sense

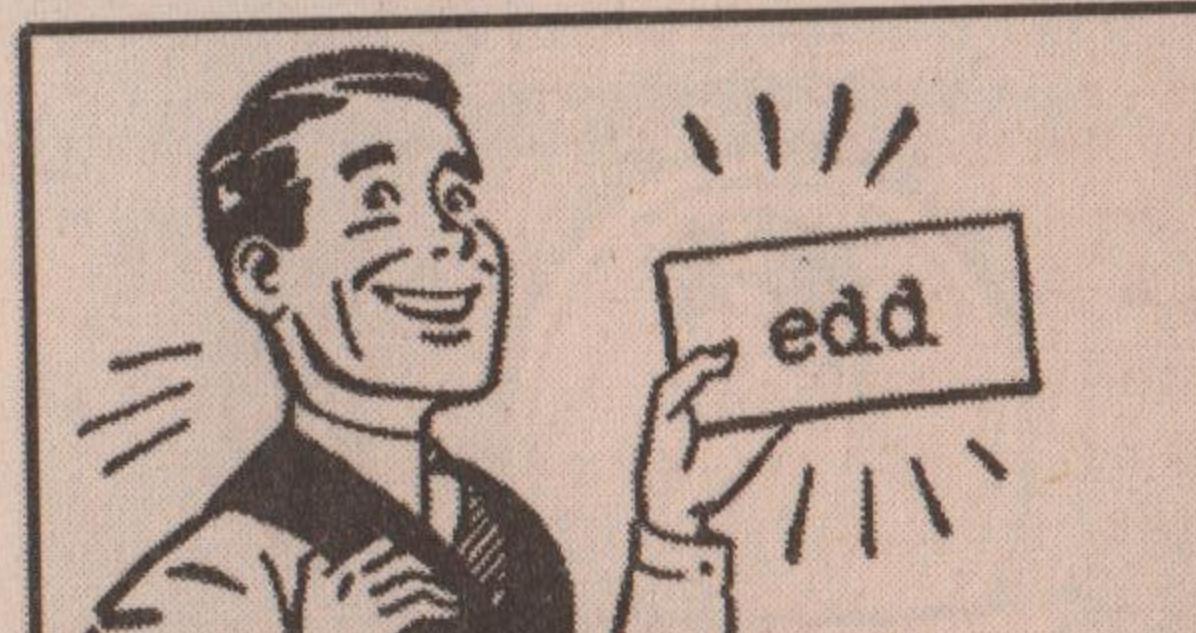
because it cannot be caught and it cannot be cured. I'm not even sure if I would be happy calling it a mental illness either. Part of this is because of all the associations and stigma that these prognoses carry but also for some more complex reasons. Perhaps more simply it is just something that makes them special. It may be a chemical imbalance, it may be genetic, it may be exacerbated by joint inoculations against measles, mumps and rubella but who knows. Clearly I've ignited in myself an interest in the human mind and in autism along with a quest for further understanding of what it is and why it happens.

I think one of the things it has highlighted though are many of the problems that I have always felt a nagging doubt and mistrust about, with the whole mental illness classification system in the first place. The diagnostic criteria for problems surrounding the brain and behaviour mean very little more often than not. After all, what is normal? Behaviour is only deemed to be abnormal because it is not something we normally see or because we can not understand why it is happening.

If it is only social convention that denotes something as peculiar then surely I would be the one with the syndrome or abnormality if I lived in a world where everyone had autism, or something else unusual about them. Of course this would make society a completely different place to be part of but isn't that the point in the first place - that it is composed of all these individuals and traits and that that is what makes it what it is.

So whose thinking is it that is wrong then, if anyone's? Standard social interaction is difficult to decode. Our world is full of inaccuracies, of contradictions, of unclear meanings, mistakes, hypocrisies and falsehoods. I can't help but be tempted to follow the logic that maybe it is us with the problem since we are so ready to accept a world that frequently does not make sense.

Natalie@rnzine.co.uk



Wow. Look at that, absolutely no space for me to write a column! Probably a good thing too. I'd have just spent it dissing Alan's column. Point of info is that it's Class War rather than any hunt sabs who are doing to toff busters thing. And I think he means Darwin, rather than Dickens. All the same I don't think either of them came up with anything to counter utilitarianism. Anyhow till next time if there is one. edd@rnzine.co.uk

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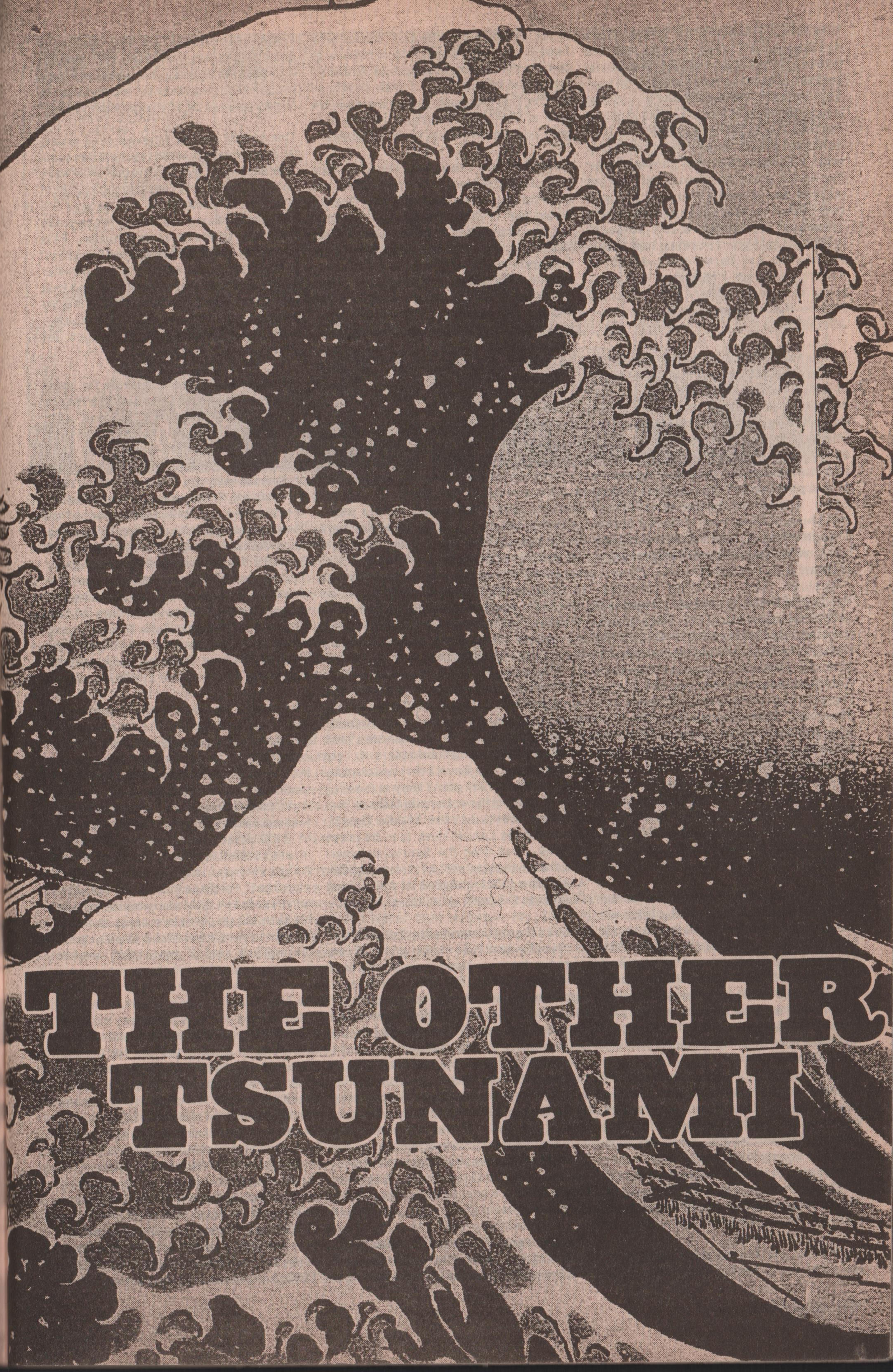
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**THE OTHER
TSUNAMI**

The West's crusaders; the United States and Britain, are giving less to help the tsunami victims than the cost of a Stealth bomber or a week's occupation of Iraq. The bill for George Bush's coming inauguration party would rebuild much of the coastline of Sri Lanka. Bush and Blair increased their first driblets of "aid" only when it became clear that people all over the world were spontaneously giving millions and a public relations problem beckoned. The Blair government's current "generous" contribution is one sixteenth of the £800m it spent bombing Iraq before the invasion and barely one twentieth of a billion pound gift, known as a "soft loan", to the Indonesian military so that it could acquire Hawk fighter-bombers.

John Pilger

As the scale of disaster grows and grows in Asia - 250,000 dead at the time of going to print - it's clear that whilst people dig deep into their pockets, the governments and corporations across the world care little for something that's happened on the other side of the world. As this gets sent off to the printers the 'generous' donations of our government, standing as it is at £50m, is dwarfed by the donations of individuals. It looks even more like pocket change when compared to the money spent on 'our' military, and the occupation of Iraq.

To make it worse the British government hasn't even paid the £50m. They've only promised it. Government's around the world have done this before though, the after the 1998 hurricanes countries' of Central America were promised £4.8bn (by world governments), £1.6bn was delivered, Mozambique in 2000 was promised £214m, they received £107m, Iran was promised £17.1m, in 2003, they received £9.5m. This has led Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, to ask that at least 500m of the 2bn so far pledged is paid, in full, immediately. As of writing only £160m has actually been given to the UN, highlighting just why Annan is so concerned.

If the aid pledged by Britain or the United States of America falls short of the aid actually required it is partly because it's tied up in other 'priorities'. So far the USA has spent \$148billion on the War and Occupation of Iraq, while Britain has spent \$11.2bn (£6bn). We have been in Iraq for 665 days, meaning that the money that the US has pledged equates to one and a half days' spending in Iraq. Britain's equals five and a half days.

We don't even need to look out of our country though to see our government wasting our taxes. The new National Identity Database scheme, as an example, which isn't going to provide food or clothes for a single person, has an estimated cost of £3.1bn. Next to that sum £50m looks like, to use a wildly inappropriate phrase, a drop in the ocean.

Meanwhile, our friends the Corporation, are busy doing their bit with their own

brand of 'global compassion'. Tesco, who have been lovely enough to contribute to the continued destruction of Britain's farming community, and with profits of £1.7bn, has managed to give the massive sum of £100,000. Vodafone, managed to give one whole hour's worth of profits.

Then you have Coca Cola, who may very well be partaking in parody, who are sending over their bottled water. Bottled water that is literally sucking the water out of communities in India, leaving their lands infertile, and leading to thousands and thousands of protestors massing outside their Indian manufacturing plant. You kind of expect Mastercard to jump into the fray: 'Bottled water - 10p; Mobile phone - £5, Tesco's own brand tin peaches (country of origin: Tanzania) - 5p. Smile on the child's face (which'll make a great corporate photo) priceless.' Thankfully this hasn't happened. Yet.

Least they be forgotten let's place the media in the firing line. Superlatives currently abound as to the humanitarian intent, whilst humanity is divided into worthy and unworthy victims. The worthy victims being destroyed by the sea - echoing one of our most elemental fears and uncertainties. The unworthy caught in man-made imperial disasters. So unworthy in fact that any attempt to place a figure on the number of dead in Iraq, as the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health tried to do in their peer-reviewed study that was ultimately published in the Lancet Medical Journal, is discredited - either because of it's methodology or intent - by every media source that reported it. As Terry Jones - the old Monty Python - asked recently "Why aren't our TV companies and newspapers running fundraisers to help Iraqis whose live have been wrecked by the invasion? Why aren't they screaming with outrage at the manmade tsunami that we have created in the Middle East?". After all if the Lancet study is to be taken at face value then the figures between the two disasters are on a comparable scale (the topmost figure of the Lancet Study puts the death toll in Iraq at 198,000).

It is not the only man-made Tsunami that our leaders and their media ignore. Every year far, far more people die from a lack of clean water, the degradation of agricultural land, the high cost of patented drugs, and armed conflict across the world, than died on Boxing day in the Tsunami. This is not to take away from the horror that the survivors must feel around the Indian Ocean, but to try and put it within a context which recognises the suffering of watching your community starve to death because either your food is exported to the 'developed world', or the land no longer supports agriculture, or people - normally aided by Western Corporations - are fighting over some 'precious' jewel.

Only the drama of a natural disaster grabs the attention of the media - especially as it was happening over the Christmas period. So, the concern that the world has

The more mundane, grinding disaster of global capitalism, liberalised trade and the international military industrial complex, though it claims far, far more lives, is largely ignored by all mainstream media.

This double standard can be seen clearly in Afghanistan, who remember was 'liberated' only two years ago. They have no clean water, and death during childbirth is a regular occurrence. So far only 3% of the international aid sent to Afghanistan has been spent on reconstruction. 84% has been spent on the US-led "coalition" in the country. An adviser to the minister of Rural Affairs has recently stated that they've received less than 20% of the aid that was promised to them, "We don't even have enough money to pay wages, let alone plan reconstruction."

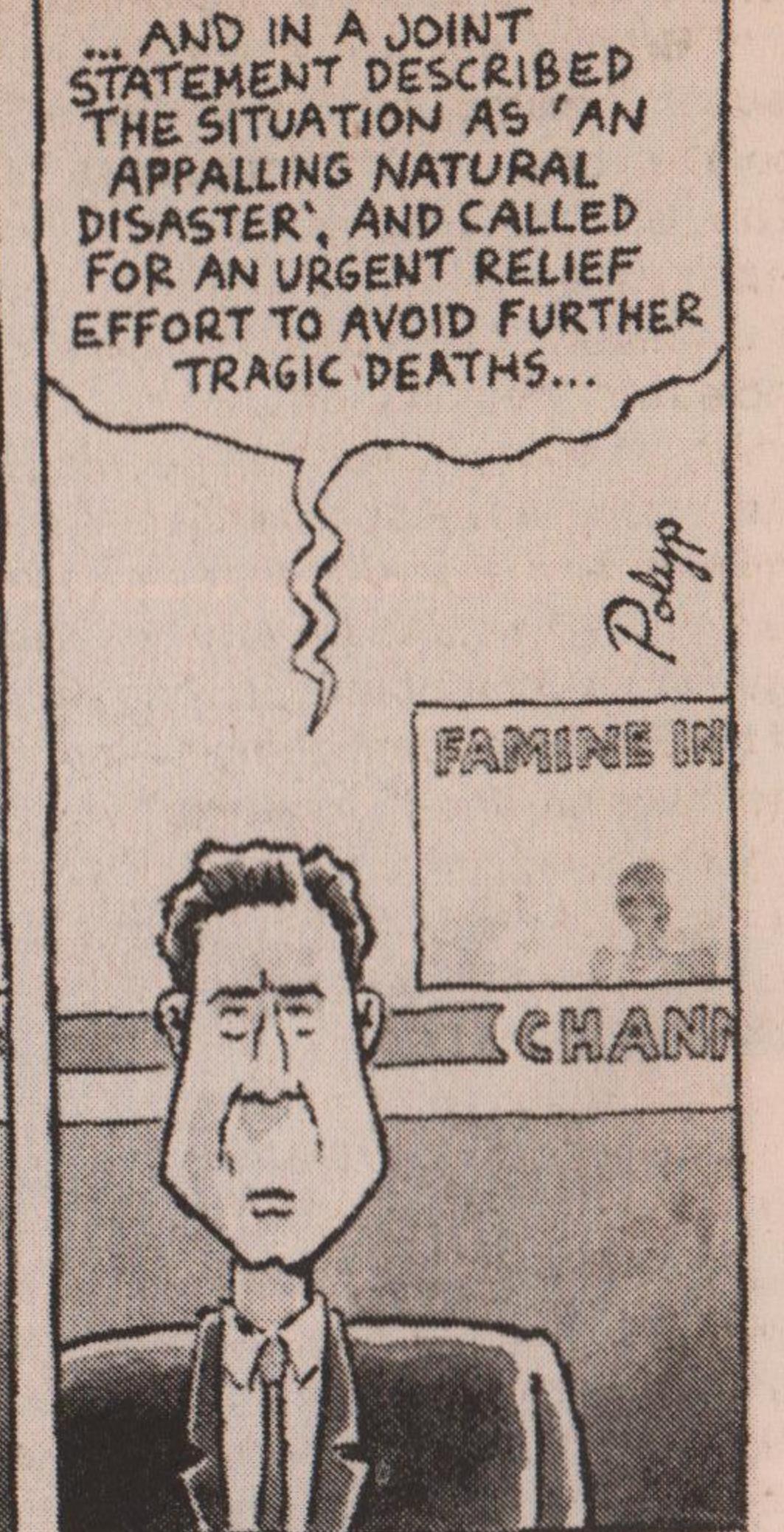
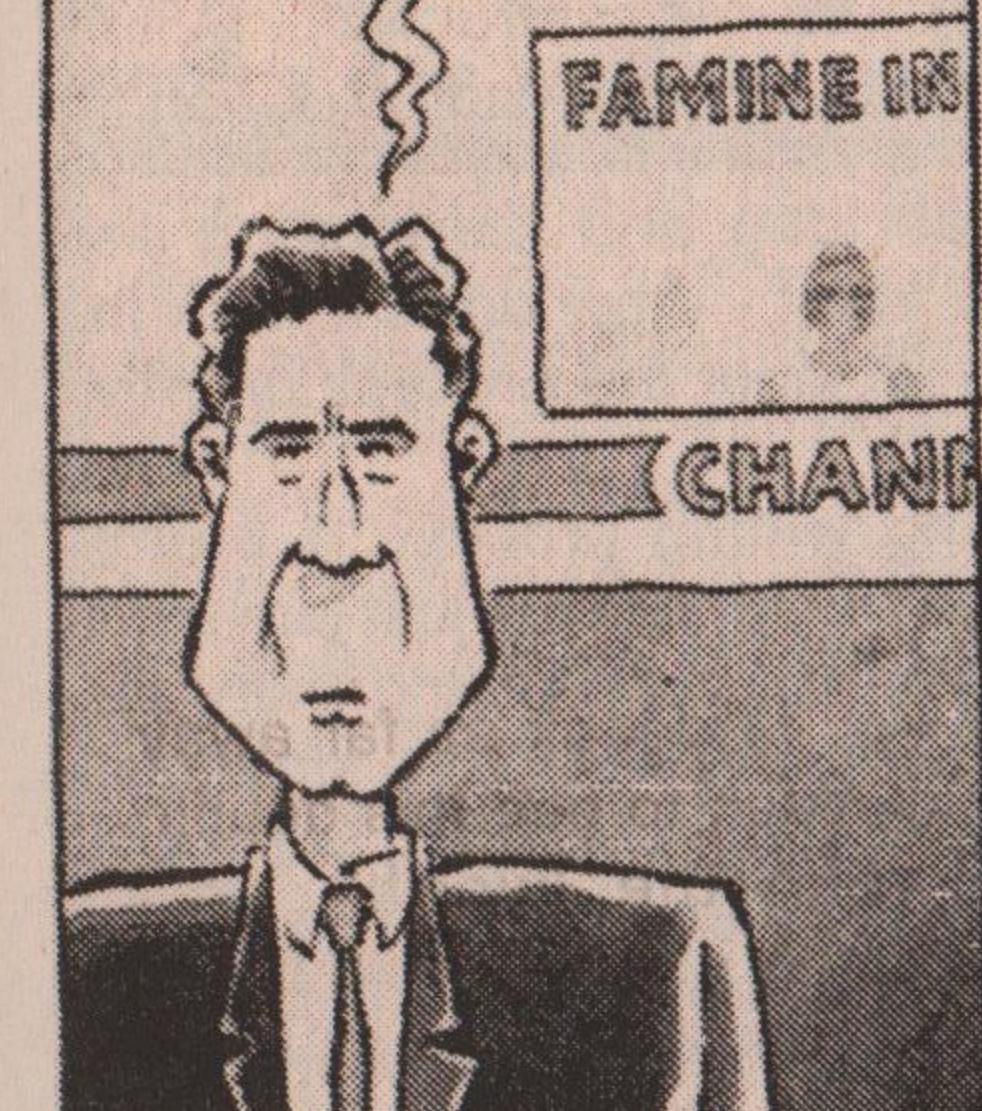
We don't even have to look as far away from the Indian Ocean to see this double standard between the 'worthy' and 'unworthy'.

Somehow it has escaped most of the media to report on what has been going on in Aceh, in the north-west of Indonesia, with the overt support of 'our' government. It was only one month before the disaster, on 24th November, when New Labour gave it's backing to an arms fair in Jakarta, "designed to meet an urgent need for the [Indonesian] armed forces to review its defence capabilities", as the Jakarta Post reported it. It is the Indonesian military that has killed more than 20,000 "insurgents" and civilians in Aceh, and responsible for the 20 years of genocide that East Timor suffered before finally becoming it's own state in 1997.

Five years ago a million Acehnese (a quarter of the population!) held a massive, peaceful, demonstration, calling for a referendum for a chance to vote on independence from Indonesia. The military decided to crush the movement, carrying out assassinations, 'disappearing' leaders, and raping the female activists. In 2000 Jafar Siddiq Hamsa, a leading international spokesperson for the Achinese returned home. He was abducted, wrapped in barbed wire, administered multiple stab wounds and had his face sliced off before being dumped. All this while Exxon Mobil happily takes the region's natural gas and oil, despite the Achinese being left in poverty.

As Allan Nairn, a journalist, who was once jailed by the Indonesian military explains: "We should put this in perspective. Now the world is looking at Aceh for the first time ever and will probably never again look at Ache with this intensity, but as dramatic as this act of nature is, it's still far less than the death toll over just a couple of years due to hunger, poor nutrition and diarrhoea; deaths mainly among children who live in poverty in Aceh. It's also dwarfed by the military massacres carried out by the Indonesian military in various places. They killed 200,000 in Timor. They killed anywhere from 400,000 to a million in Indonesia itself when they consolidated power in 1965 to 1967. So, the concern that the world has

...DEATH TOLL HAS NOW REACHED OVER A MILLION. REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE G8 NATIONS MET EARLIER TODAY, AND IN A JOINT STATEMENT DESCRIBED THE SITUATION AS BEING 'SYMPTOMATIC OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION', AND CALLED FOR AN 'URGENT AND RADICAL' REDISTRIBUTION OF THE WORLD'S WEALTH



now for this disaster is appropriate, but we should have that concern all the time. When people are dying, not just from natural tsunamis, but from military or police bullets, often paid for by the United States, or dying from preventable hunger. There are also thousands of American individuals who could sit down right now and write a cheque for \$50million. They could save tens of thousands of lives, but there's no social pressure on them to do that, because we live in a world where it's assumed that it's okay to let people starve while the dollar that can save them sit idly in your pocket."

those who depend on the economies 'like saying the time to decide what to do about homeland security is when the plane is flying into the tower.'

The problem is that it might happen in the 'developed' world soon. In fact during 2004 it did in Florida, with three massive hurricanes, one almost every three weeks. Granted the loss of life was much less than in Asia, but to a large extent because of the forewarning of the event, rather than their actual destructiveness. David King, one of Britain's leading scientist, believes that the Tsunami disaster underlines the threat posed by climate change. "What is happening in the Indian Ocean underlines the importance of the Earth's system to our ability to live safely. One side of this is we need to prepare ourselves against these increased impacts, the other side, of course, is changing our energy industry - in other words, to move away from fossil fuels."

Sri Lanka, with the attempt to put down the separatist movement in the Tamil region to a certain degree - though with far fewer casualties - mimics the Indonesian situation. Perhaps it should be concerning then that the US has boasted it is providing military as well as financial aid to the region. Especially since the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) is complaining, through the Human Rights Watch, that the Indonesian military is using the disaster as cover to launch a new offensive on them, despite the ceasefire supposedly signed two years ago. In turn the Tamil Tigers are complaining that the aid coming into Sri Lanka is being diverted away from Tamil.

It seems odd how 'our' leaders haven't jumped on the chance to have a 'war on the environment' (even though I suppose the West currently is, but that's for a different article). But this is one of the reasons the West cares so little. Tsunamis can be written off as freak occurrences. The lovely money men (read economists) have also already decided that the disaster isn't really going to effect the world economy. Few of the homeless, displaced and unemployed in the region will be able to claim insurance (not least because this is - according to insurance companies - 'an act of god'). And if stuff doesn't effect the world economy then unsurprisingly George Monbiot has pointed out is a bit

...AND IN A JOINT STATEMENT DESCRIBED THE SITUATION AS 'AN APPALING NATURAL DISASTER', AND CALLED FOR AN URGENT RELIEF EFFORT TO AVOID FURTHER TRAGIC DEATHS...

Polpe

Of course little of this is discussed in everyday media. We can't give more aid because it's more important for us to invest in defence such as 'our' nuclear submarines in Faslane. We can't write off the debt that has been accumulated thanks to IMF and World Bank schemes because that would damage the 'fragile' world economy, which is of course more important. We can't help the countries get out of the stranglehold of liberalised globalisation because we have to have cheap food (such as shrimp) and cheap textiles (such as jeans). And we certainly can't stop driving our cars, flying our planes, or overheating our homes, as it would be the 'death' of the economy. Of course little of this is discussed in mainstream media, or by politicians because it would be the equivalent of shooting themselves in the foot.

What happened on Boxing Day was horrendous, and it is impossible to relate to those who have lost their family or friends. But the destruction of Fallujah from American bombs, or Sub-Saharan Africa from AIDS and lack of food and water is equally horrendous. The difference is that Iraq and lack of necessities such as clean water are man-made phenomena, and as such preventable. As writer Harsha Walia noted, "Compassion [for the Tsunami] has become morally and politically appropriate, as it should be. What is inappropriate is the ability to decide which images are worthy of these emotions. What is inexcusable is when those images are a direct consequence of policies waged by our governments and corporations for which we are culpable, we seem to exhibit compassion-deficient syndrome."

edd@rnzine.co.uk.
Email for footnotes.



I first came across AD7 at the end of 2003 supporting Capdown, they sounded great but it was only when I got their album that I realised the lyrics were as good as the sound! A month or so later I asked them if they would play an anti-fascist gig in Ipswich, they did, and turned out to be a band who don't just sing good stuff about working for equality and resisting power structures but live it out. The following is an interview put together via email.

RN: I read an interview with a band where the drummer said that their writing process was long and exhausting as they all had input - how does it work in Ad7 do you all input the process or only some of you?

A7: Our song writing process is pretty long yeah! To be honest, we just jam until we're totally feeling something then we get a basic song and work on a structure that we're all happy with, then we work on it some more, then try it out live. Then quite often we scrap bits and change it some more. We're down the practise room as much as possible. It changes as people come up with different parts, rhythms etc. Then I write words that feel right for the song and then re-write them, then we demo, then it might change some more. We're quite fussy!

RN: How is it working out in recording the new album - how are you finding it? Are you pleased with what's taking shape? The second albums have a reputation for being difficult, is this so? Has recording felt different with Gav and Will in the line-up?

A7: It is done, and we're happy with it, although we're going to re-do a few things and re-mix and master it. So it is probably going to be released later than we anticipated. I think the AD7 fans will be into it and we think it's better than Songs Of Innocence and Experience. So yeah, all positive really. It's tough writing an album full stop, it's a real all consuming process for a big part of the year, and it's really hard to think of anything else especially in the few months up to recording. It's hard work but overall we really love doing it and wouldn't have it any other way. I'm glad it's pretty much complete and we're looking forward to it seeing the light of day. We're really lucky to have Gav (new trumpet player/singer) and Will (bass) in Adequate Seven, we've all been able to really focus on the band since they've joined and they are awesome musicians.

RN: I first saw Ad7 at the end of 2003 as the 1st band on with Capdown and was really impressed - I got the album and was really excited by the lyrics, really articulate politico-social stuff, how much of the motivation behind the band is political? Was it the original intention or did it evolve?

A7: Cheers. Well our politics weren't the incentive to form a band, that just came down to wanting to be in a band basically, and I don't think we are necessarily a political band. When we started out the first song we wrote that had a political vibe was No Space. Which is a rant about

ADEQUATE SEVEN

how adverts and the media shape identity and our perceptions of gender and sexuality. When it came to writing lyrics for the album that Household Name were going to release, I remember we were chatting and it was just like, 'Well we all feel strongly about certain issues such as media scape-goating of illegal immigrants, the problem of racism, and the brutality of aspects of global capitalism'. Which in our view is the fundamental factor in many wars such as Iraq, Afghanistan etc. It just seemed totally natural and common sense to write about what issues we feel strongly about and what is on our minds. We try and be non-preachy on stage though as most people at punk shows usually share our views anyway. We prefer for people to judge us as a band, on the music, maybe pick up a CD if they like it and read the lyrics for themselves and hopefully the songs that are more political might strike a chord with some people. If it gets someone interested in challenging the lies and the bullshit that we are being told by our leaders then we're happy. Generally though, I see the lyrics more as about events and things you encounter in your life that provoke emotion and feeling, then I try to capture that feeling in the song. So they're about just everything really!

RN: On Songs Of Innocence and Experience the songs deal with global politics but also with how corporate interests shape us as an individuals. How do you think the individual can resist the pressures of corporate power?

A7: That's a big question because capitalism has an effect on both mainstream opinions and our identities. When it comes to the individual's perceptions I think that ultimately it's a matter of understanding. The pressures of corporate power are immense and deeply ingrained in our society, and I can't say that I'm able to resist it completely nor probably will I ever be, but you have to be aware nonetheless. My view is that I don't see a problem buying a CD from a record company, but I do have a problem buying bananas which were picked by children working all day when they should be in school, when I can pay a little more for fairly traded alternatives. Where capitalism is at its most extreme, where it is the cause of war, child labour and obscene poverty, if people can understand the effect that this has on others then maybe it would change their voting patterns, or make them speak out in opposition. There is a

hegemony promoted by the government and many parts of the media that the only way for us to exist and for this world to run efficiently is through a world based on capitalist values and free trade. The major flaw with this is that with this belief system set in place the powerful western countries use this to their economic advantage by installing new 'friendly' governments, and gaining cheap goods and labour outside of their own countries. The media does not put across an unbiased perspective especially on issues such as terrorism and the War in Iraq. No matter how appealing marketing for McDonalds may be it still has a massive negative impact on the environment as a corporation. Same applies to the brands which make people in poorer countries lives a misery. As members of society we buy clothes from capitalists, we buy shopping from the supermarket, we run businesses, we sell our labour working for companies. It's when the desire for profit is taken to the extreme it becomes unacceptable. Brands such as Nike and Gap have a history of allowing bad conditions and child labour in many of their factories, so it's just a matter of being aware and then taking action. The western corporate power, with the help of the media it controls, has created an unsafe and unfair world. People are dying in poorer nations because the patterns of world trade under modern capitalism mean hard working people can't earn a living, and more directly as global superpowers embark on a war for the sole purpose of the economic interest of the government and corporate elite. It just seems like a complete lack of compassion, when we (the richer nations) have the money to prevent this. Just doing the smallest thing to voice your opposition to this will make a difference whether it's going to an anti-war demo or not filling up in Shell or Esso. If you can understand the reasons why the UK and the US governments act in the way they do, and try to see through the pro-government propaganda then it makes it easier to make a decision to vote differently or make even the slightest changes in our patterns of consumption.

RN: Has the last year of blatant US global hegemony affected your new songs at all?

A7: Yes, fundamentally, is the short answer. There are several songs on the new L.P. which I think capture how we feel about that particular issue and ultimately are angry songs. We take the

view that the only way we can prevent humanity from total decline is by adopting a more internationalist framework of tolerance and diplomacy. Certainly not through uni-lateral wars or living in a world where one country is able to dominate the whole world's resources.

RN: For me Ad7 have been really encouraging and helped me not to get smothered by the culture of capitalism, do you have authors or bands or other input that keep you vibrant and visionary?

A7: Well everyone in the band is influenced by different stuff but I'm a big Michael Moore fan, I think that resistance to Bush needs to be totally mainstream. Rage against the Machine, Refused, Propaghandi, Public Enemy, Anti-flag, Pilger, Marx, Chomsky, Five Knuckle, stuff like Sly and the family stone, Bill Hicks, Richard Pryor, (I)NC,

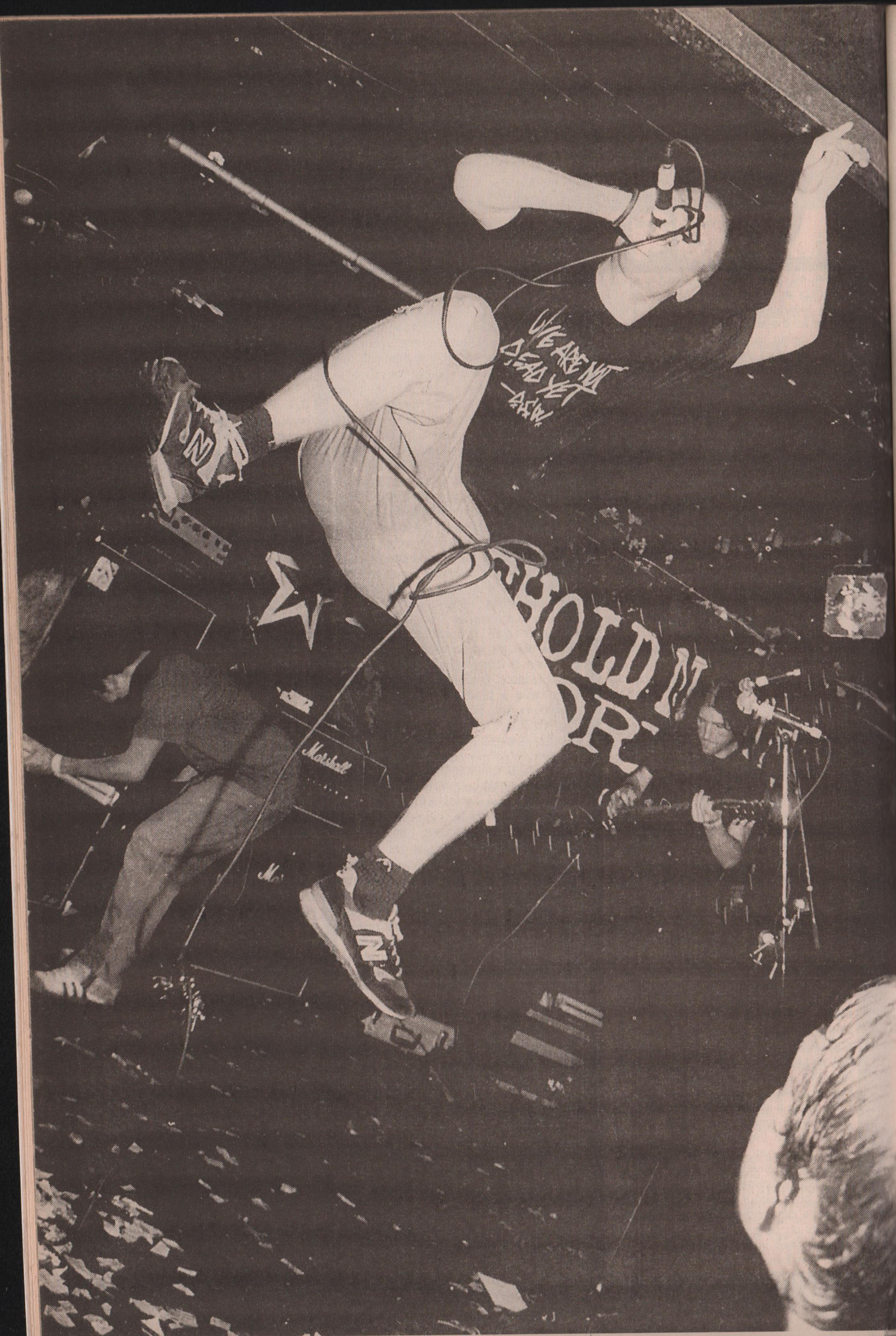
RN: You played several benefit gigs last year; is that something you see as an important part of what you're about?

A7: I think we're very lucky to have ended up in a position where a fair few people generally turn up to our shows, and that can obviously be a very useful tool. By playing benefit shows I guess we can use what we do every day and what we enjoy, i.e. just being a band, to raise awareness of certain issues, and to raise money for certain causes. In that sense it is certainly an important part of what we do. Unfortunately we end up having to turn a lot of gigs like that down too, because of other plans and because frankly every band has bills to pay, and in order to keep the band going we can't afford to do many shows where we don't get paid etc. But, like every band, we do what we can.

RN: How do you see 2004 as a band, was it good? I think you played about 130 gigs, many headlining, did you have 'goals' for the year, and how did they work out?

A7: If we had 'goals' we wouldn't be in this band I can tell you that (laughs)! Basically our aim in Adequate Seven is just to play our music every night in as many different towns, cities and countries as we possibly can and try to do something positive. When it comes down to it, we believe in what we do and are quite ambitious!

Interview: Tim Forster. Photo: Edd. Adequate Seven's debut is on Household Name Records.



Five Knuckle are one of my favourite bands. I doubt there's too many people reading this who are new to them, but for those who haven't, 5K play blistering hardcore punk with awesome lyrics. I worked out the other day that I've seen them almost 30 times live - and I don't want to go into how many photos I have of the band! Regardless I caught up with Shaun (drums) and Dan (vocals) in December to have a chat about their lives, and the fact that Shaun is leaving the band. Ed, one of the band's guitarist, dropped in some helpful opinions every now and then when he wasn't being distracted by more exciting things!

RN: So I guess the big news is that Shaun's leaving. Why'd you decide on that?

Shaun: I just wanted to sort my life out. Find my own place to live and stuff like that. Concentrate on that, and do other things.

RN: Haven't you guys been playing since you were thirteen?

S: Probably younger than that, I reckon we must have been about eleven!

Dan: We started at school. Eleven, or twelve when we started those bands.

S: It was pretty awful stuff.

D: Oh we were alright!

S: I've got some of our tapes though of us doing Nirvana covers though, and they're fucking appalling! We're so bad. I only recognise them as well because I have it written down on the tape what I'm supposed to be listening to. (laughs)

D: We started playing together when we had just started playing instruments so it was going to be crap I guess.

S: It was better than anyone else we were

do at that age.

D: That we knew at any rate. So yeah, it's been a while. Ten years.

S: Yeah, fucking hell, almost more!

RN: Is gonna be weird then right?

D: Yeah it'll be weird.

E: We'll probably just get a better drummer though! (laughs)

D: It will be different, but you can be positive or negative about these things, and I guess we just have to be...

E: Negative about it! (giggles)

D: To be positive about it. I think that it'll work out. To start off with who ever we get in is probably just going to be playing what Shaun's playing anyway. Hopefully whoever it is will be quite good so they should be able to pull it off!

RN: So it's not the beginning of the end?

D: No, not really. I don't know, though. We've been doing this for a really long time, and this will be the biggest change that we've ever had. But no we're planning to keep going, we just have to overcome this obstacle first and then...

RN: I think there's a point of information over there.

D: I think that's a silent cheer from Ian.

Ian Armstrong: The beginning of the end was your first practice. (laughs)

D: It's true! But, yeah, it's the biggest hurdle we've had, but hopefully we'll be able to clear it.

RN: So you're having a hiatus from now until April right?

D: Well we need to get a new drummer before April. If we don't get a full time drummer as a member of the band then

we plan to hopefully have someone to fill in so that we can tour in April. That's the plan. Getting someone to fill in shouldn't be as hard as getting ourselves a new drummer. We know a lot of drummers, it's just if they're free and able to commit to the band. But this is a note: We need a new drummer, so if anyone wants to fill in then give us a shout basically (laughs).

RN: When did you decide to leave the band?

S: I actually decided at the beginning of the year. I thought about it lots, I thought about it loads and loads, and decided that it was the right thing to do.

D: Yeah, we've known this for ages, we just hadn't made it totally public.

S: We were just being slack.

D: Yeah, we have been really slack, because we really should have done something about it by now. We haven't for some reason that I'm not sure why.

E: Because that's what we're like (giggles).

D: We've been pretty busy too.

RN: Busy because of releasing the album?

D: Sort of. Up until last summer I didn't realise - until we took the three months off over the summer - until I'd had a month off just how hectic the past year and half was. Because we toured practically non-stop, and writing the album was really stressful, and we did it all basically in a year. And then we recorded the album over a month period that was really stressful, and then toured for a month - two months pretty much - and then had the break. But it was only on the break that I remembered what it was like not to live under that pressure. So it was a really heavy year and a half. But it

did do us the world of good I reckon.

S: Yeah it was fun. It was a good summer too.

E: Shit weather.

D: Yeah well that's England for you!

RN: So did you guys come play the In Arms Reach thing on your break?

D: Yeah we did. I think we played about four shows. We did Wasted Festival...

S: Ashton Court Festival, which is a local festival...

D: And then we did a gig to link the two together. Then we did the squat show and that was it.

S: That was the hottest thing ever though. It's the hottest thing I think I've ever played.

RN: It was apparently 42° when you guys were playing.

D: I'm surprised people didn't pass out.

S: I almost did man.

RN: I think it was the Mercury League drummer who came closest to passing out. After their set all he could do was sit there and pant.

D: It was fucking cool, but it was totally fucking exhausting.

RN: How has the new album been received, what's the reaction been like to it?

D: I think pretty good. It's been a slow process getting it out because we released it at the beginning of May, then did the Seven Seconds tour - which totally wasn't our crowd - then didn't do many more of our own shows before going on the three month break. So it's been a bit slow getting it out to people, but all the reviews of it have been really good. People have been getting into it. But it seems having chatted to a few people about it that they haven't found it to be the easiest album to take first off. I think it takes a few listens to get into it. Which is weird for us because we know it so well. But I get the impression that people really like it but it's not that easily accessible first time round.

RN: It seemed to take ages to come out, was that because you were working on it for ages,

creative block or whatever?

S: I think it was just that we were touring! We just toured, and it's really hard to write on tour.

D: Yeah we wrote the whole thing in the space of a year pretty much, but we were touring six months of that year.

RN: How did you go down on the Seven Seconds tour being that it was such a different crowd?

D: Yeah, I think it went down pretty well. I mean they didn't go off to us or anything like that but...

S: I think most people who hadn't seen us before just thought we were this ska band, and so a lot of people, even bands, didn't rate us before, because they'd never heard us. But then they saw us and realised we're not a ska band.

D: It gave us the chance to prove ourselves. A lot of people had already decided that they didn't like us before actually hearing or seeing us.

S: Yeah that was crap.

D: But then they saw us and they were like, 'Oh, they're actually alright'. So it was a good chance to show people who'd never seen us what we were about. And I thought we did go down really well.

S: And we got to see Seven Seconds every night which was cool. (laughs)

RN: Do you still get accused of being a ska band much?

S: Not so much anymore.

D: Not since the new album came out, but we do still get it a little bit. It's only really from people who've never heard the band's music, or seen us live. So, yeah, fuck 'em... basically! (laughs) It's an annoying tag!

RN: In fairness you did have a ska core song in your back catalogue.

D: Which one though?

S: There are a couple with ska bits in.

RN: I can't remember the name but it was on the first EP.

S: Oh yeah that was pretty bad.

RN: Why don't you play anything off the EP?

D: People still ask for that fucking song. And we still haven't played it for a good three years! We do still play a little bit of what people call ska.

RN: What

"they" call ska.

S: Yeah the common folk! (laughs)

D: No! The thing about ska, is if you're talking about ska, it sounds fuck all like all the ska core bands that are around today. Unfortunately with anything there becomes an image or a label with something, say with ska core, or like hardcore, and once you hear that and you haven't heard other bands you'll have an idea of it which distorts how you see other bands.

S: You should never mix the two! That's all I'm saying.

D: I mean if someone comes to you and says that Five Knuckle sounds like a ska core band would you say that was a fair description?

RN: No.

D: See that's the only problem we have with the label. It's not a very good description. I've got nothing against that genre of music - I personally think it's great - but I just don't think it describes our sound at all.

RN: To change the subject, how many times did you make it across to mainland Europe this year?

D: Three times.

RN: Is it beginning to feel a bit more open for you guys?

D: No, it's still a bit of a struggle. The whole European experience is just.... As far as gigs go...

S: It varies.

D: Yeah, it really varies depending on where it is we go, and we always play different venues when ever we go across. But we have a small following in a couple of parts, which is cool. But the whole experience of going to Europe is amazing every time. We don't worry so much about how our following is and that sort of thing. It's great though.

RN: You had pretty tough drives I heard when you went across with Leftover Crack.

S: Oh yeah!

D: We only just got back from that tour, and only really just recovered from that tour.

S: That was stressful!

D: That was the most stressful and stupid tour I think we've ever done, and we'll never do something like it again.

S: It just almost broke us both mentally and physically. I felt rubbish by the end of it, and just wasn't enjoying it.

D: There just wasn't time to



actually get to some of the shows.

RN: Because you missed a couple right?

D: Yeah. And then if we didn't have enough time to get to the shows, play the shows, and then sleep. We had to do a lot of overnight drives. Obviously with seven people in a transit van, there's a limit to how much sleep you're able to get.

S: We were eating at totally irregular times as well, and eating maybe only once a day. It wasn't enough.

D: That was pretty hard.

RN: Did you have a break from then until now?

D: Yeah, we finished on the end of November, and then we've played two gigs, then had the gig today [11th December], then might have one on the 15th, and then Shaun's final show on the 21st!

RN: So three gigs left. How many hours are you going to be playing in Bristol?

S: I don't know actually.

RN: I mean you should be playing every song you've ever written.

S: (laughs) It's a point actually I should probably start thinking about what I am going to be doing.

D: People keep saying that, or at least our really old friends, keep saying that we should play our really old songs, like one friend wants us to play 'What's gone wrong?', which is the first song we ever did. And it's a really nice idea, but there's only going to be about seven people in the audience who have actually heard the songs before.

S: And they're not very good songs! (laughs)

D: So I don't think we're going to bother. It's a nice idea, but probably not.

S: It will be nice to play stuff live that I enjoy playing, that's about it really.

RN: So you're not going to be playing the Kerrang! singles of the week?

D: (laughs) No those are never going to be played again!

S: I don't think I could play them if I tried

to be honest.

D: Yeah that's a long time ago now. Have you ever actually heard them?

RN: No, I've just heard rumours of their existence!

D: Oh you'd love it. It's before our voices have broken. (laughs)

S: There's a song where I drop the stick as well, and that's the version that got put onto the record.

RN: Why did Kerrang! give it single of the week then?

S: I have no idea.

D: I'll tell you a funny thing. The first time that it got sent to them, they reviewed it, and they gave it one 'K', and said, 'These kids should never have been allowed instruments'. (laughs) And then two months later the guy who released it, sent them another record, and they gave it - was it five out of five?

S: Yeah.

D: And gave it single of the week. Saying, 'This is the best record that has ever been released'. And the next record that got released they basically did the same thing with it. Melody Maker gave it single of the week, and Record Collector said that it was the best single released in 1996!

S: We still didn't sell any though. (laughs)

D: Yeah I think we managed to get through 300. But that's the thing it wasn't that it was a really good song...

S: It was just because little kids fucking yelling.

D: It was basically three kids telling everyone to fuck off. Like I think the first lyrics for it was, 'Britpop is fucking crap.' (laughs)

S: John Peel said that he couldn't play one of the songs because there was too much swearing in it!

D: Yeah he played the B-Side of the 7" and he said, 'Oh well I would play the A-side, but there's just too much swearing!'

S: I've got it on tape, it's fucking cool.

RN: I was going to ask what's the Bristol scene like at the moment?

D: Don't ask us, because we have no idea! We're never in Bristol. I'd assume that there isn't a scene in Bristol, but I expect there probably is, we're just never around to actually see it! There's good crust scene.

S: But they keep themselves to themselves.

D: Yeah they're all getting on a bit now. And then there's gigs that all the Household Name and Hidden Talent bands play, which are pretty good these days. There's a guy called Matt, who puts gigs on, down at the Croft. Some of them have been really good recently. And then there's this thing where people go to the club on Wednesday night and listen to shit music. That was what I was actually thinking might be the 'scene'.

S: Yeah. I mean I don't think there's some massive cliquey scene. I think that people who go to punk shows just go to punk shows, especially the kids who are our age. People seem to be quite varied in musical taste.

RN: Didn't you guys - or at least Saul - put on shows at one point?

S: Yeah Saul did. He still does it now, he started doing it again now.

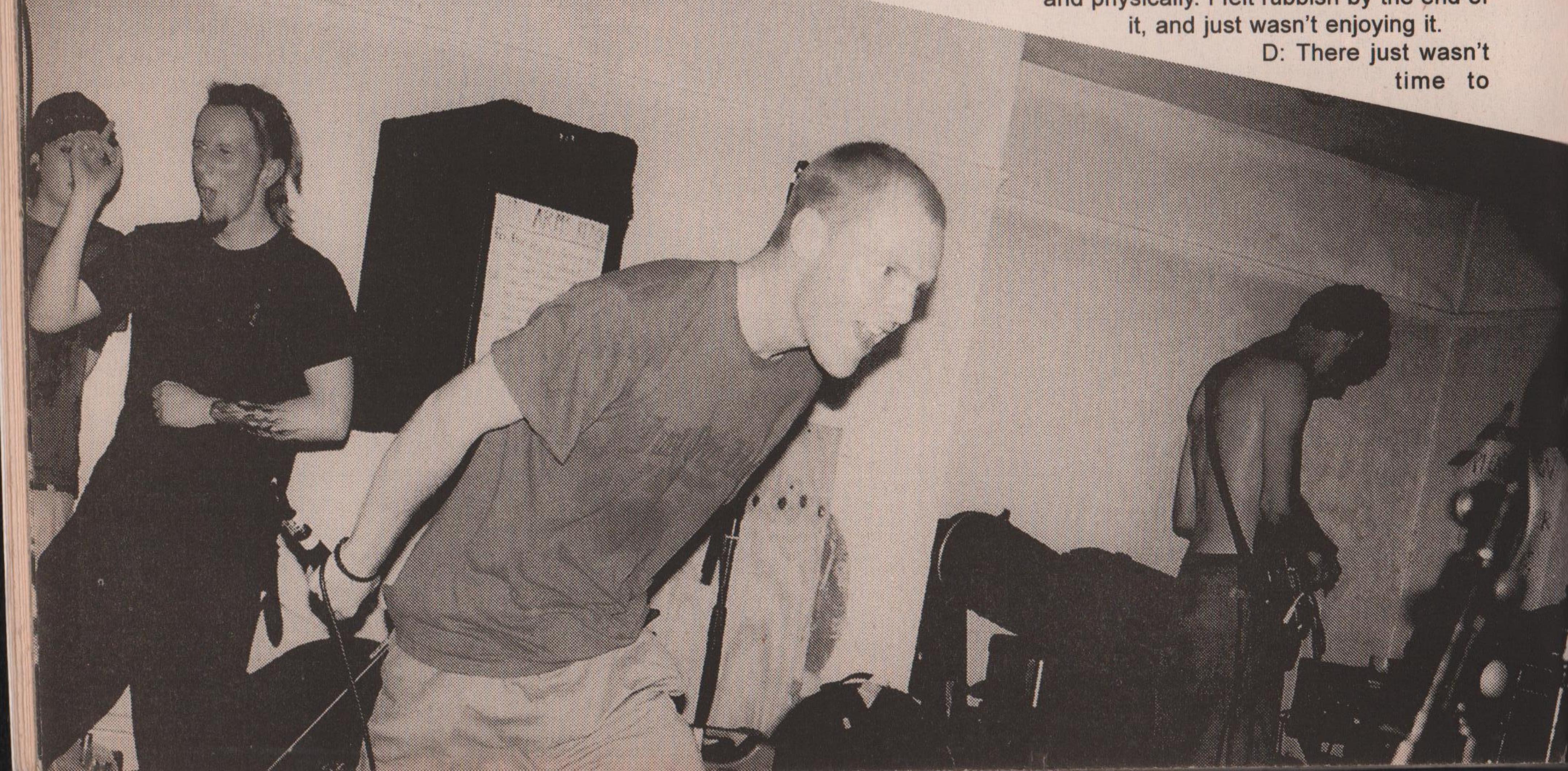
D: He couldn't do it for a while because we were gone for so long at any one time.

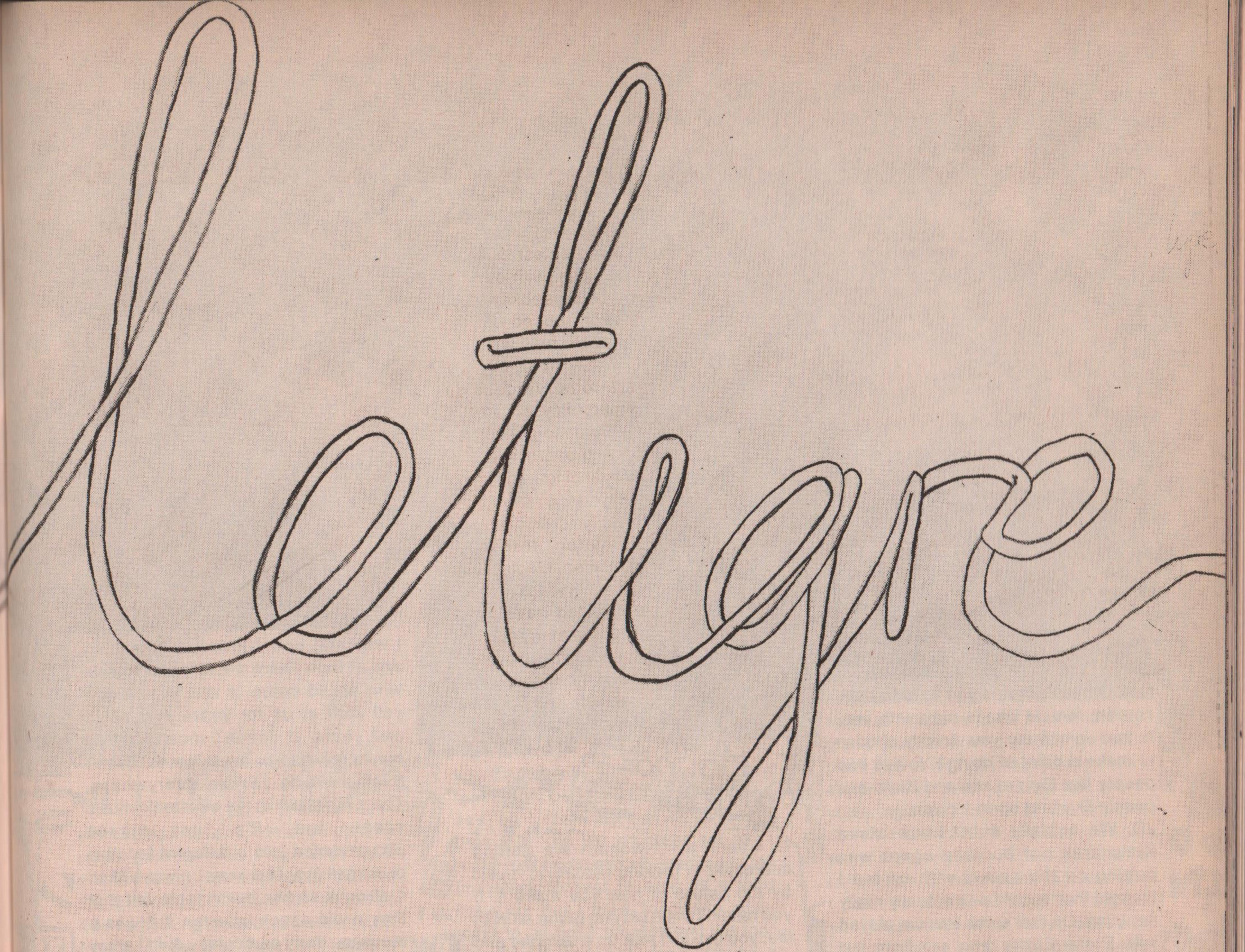
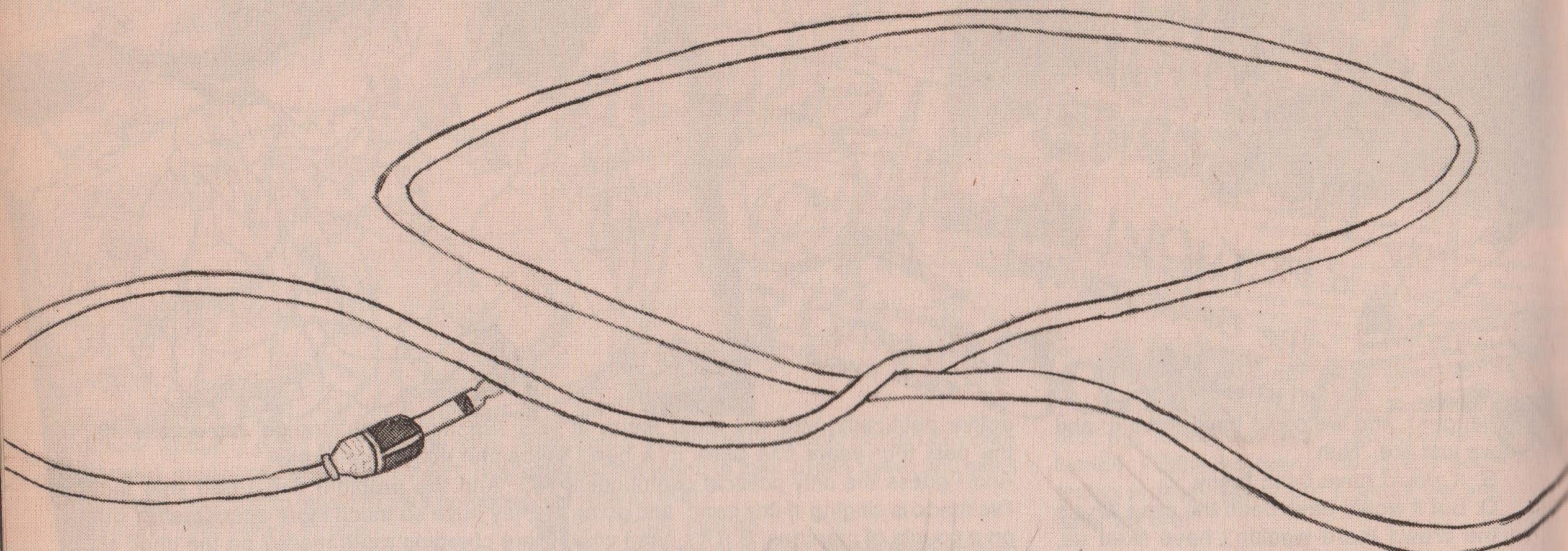
S: He's started doing a club night as well actually.

D: But yeah I'm not sure about a 'scene'. But if you ask someone else in Bristol, some one that just goes to gigs, or AKO, or something, then they'll tell you that there is a scene, which we're just probably completely unaware of.

RN: Are there many bands in Bristol?

S: I'd imagine there are fucking loads of younger bands, which again we just don't





Natalie's left introducing Le Tigre in my hands because she doesn't know what to write. The problem is I'm not sure I can write anything which wouldn't be painfully clichéd, so I'm not gonna bother. This interview was done in November, at a PR office, which is why the interview is a little rushed. At least you can't see nervousness when it's transcribed! The interview was with the whole band JD, Johanna and Kathleen.

Nat: So you're over here for the new album. How's that going?

JD: It's going great. We've been to places we've never been. We got to play Moscow and Slovenia and Amsterdam.

Nat: What's Moscow like in terms of the whole feminist and ex-riot grrrl scene?

Kathleen: We didn't really get to see very much because it's so expensive to go over there. We weren't really aware of what kind of show we were playing until we got there and it was kind of a weird corporate event that wasn't really our style.

JD: We had a few interviews that were a little strange too. It seems that maybe

feminism isn't really a big movement or way of life for the people, or at least the people who interviewed us.

K: At the same time there were people at the show who were really into it and it meant something to them, so it was sort of a hard situation to totally analyze.

Nat: With your shows they are obviously a real performance with the dancing and the projections. Why do you think that's important to you, to incorporate these things?

JD: We really like to give to the audience and we know the amount of time it takes for us to prepare shows is really important to us. We want to give a beautiful gift to them, so we spend a lot of time trying to figure out how we can do that movement in a successful way.

Edd: There's been a bit of a backlash because this album is coming out on a major. Why did you think that was important, because you must have known there was going to be a backlash to it, to still go on the major.

Johanna: You know, I think the direct

community we're most in touch with, in terms of the feminist-queer community that we feel real close to was actually very supportive of the decision. I think that the idea of a band with radical values and with this feminist message, and a band of three women, who make their own music, the idea that that they could have a shot at reaching a wider audience and perhaps influencing mainstream culture in some kind of way is really exciting to a lot of people. Most of the feedback we've gotten actually has been positive and as far as people feeling it's some kind of 'sell out' type thing to do we're just really confident in ourselves as a band and with our relationships with each other that we didn't step into anything naively. We've been running our business for six years ourselves so we feel like we know the ins and outs and the benefits and risks involved. I feel like 'the backlash' hasn't really touched us in that sense.

K: We also started our own independent record label to release our back catalogue when Mr Lady closed because we didn't want our records to be lost forever and we also didn't want to put them on a major

so we kept those records. I personally have tens of records out on indie labels at the same time so I didn't really feel like it was that big of a deal. We have way more records out on indie labels right now and we have one on a major. It's a crazy experiment and I've done things the same way for 15 or 16 years since I started making music and personally I just got really bored with doing everything exactly the same. It is kind of impossible in the current economic situation in the United States to stay on an indie label and to be on radio, or on television or anything like that. I think we would really be shooting ourselves in the foot and shooting our audiences in the foot too, to deny people access to what we are doing just because they do not have the perfect record collection.

Edd: Is it important then that you guys are in the record stores in the small town and on MTV so that the people who otherwise wouldn't be exposed to you guys would be.

JD: That's one thing for sure. For us when we were younger we didn't have this

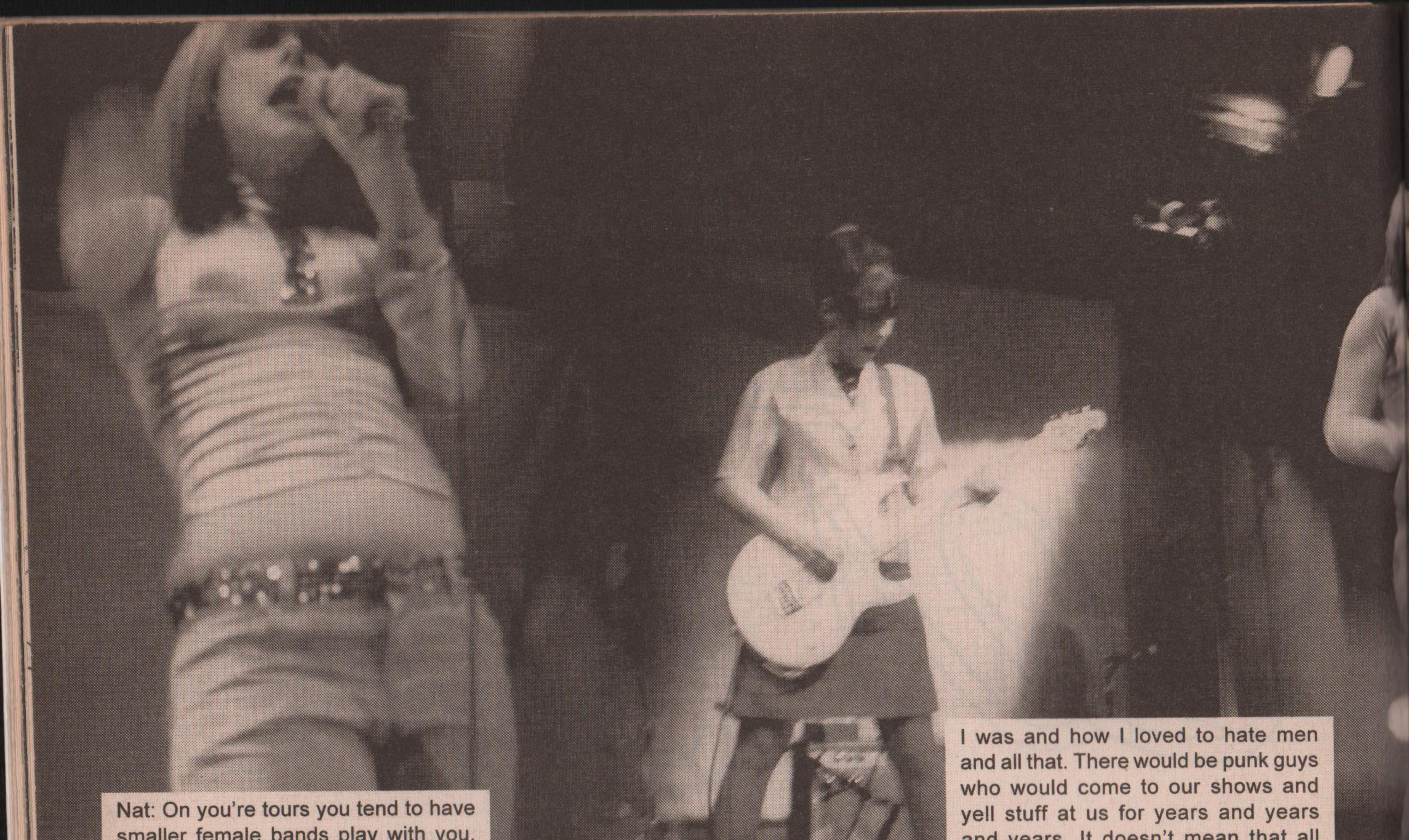
option of a band to like and to get these messages from and there are more kids out there who are freaks and feminists and queer kids who need to have a community and I think that we could possibly help them out.

Nat: Touching on that is that something that you guys regret not having when you were growing up? That sense of community that has been able to be created more so now?

K: Yeah. We feel so lucky doing what we do and I definitely think that we really want to have other feminist and queer peers around us. The only way that is going to happen is if they see that other people have come before them and that they learn from our mistakes and learn from our successors. We really want to support younger or older people who are just finding out about feminism and queer history and all of the homocore and riot grrrl movements that have happened. That can only make it better for us. In a way it's selfish because we want more cool girl bands to play with and more cool queer bands to play with.

Nat: Le Tigre and Bikini Kill were considered the goddesses of this genre in a sense. Do you want that or do you see the problem of worship of the status of the bands and idolising people.

J: I think we're really proud of our achievements and the music we're making and the show we're putting on but I don't think any of us would ever want that to be at the expense of other female bands. In fact I think we are really hungry for like-minded performers to be on the road with so we can play shows with them and listen to their records and to be in dialogue with other artists. In some degrees we do have that with a number of our contemporaries. We are really inspired by Peaches and Chicks on Speed and Lesbians on Ecstasy and Erase Errata and Sleater-Kinney. There are lots of female bands and we don't feel we are better than them or that we are on the throne, like giving them orders or something. I think everyone holds a certain place in the community and it wouldn't exist the way it does without all those holes being filled.



Nat: On your tours you tend to have smaller female bands play with you. Is that something you directly choose or make a point of doing? You've had people like Electrelane and Kato and people like that open for you.

JD: We actually didn't know about Kato until our booking agent was putting on the shows with us but I thought their record was actually really amazing. On that same tour we played with Erase Errata who are from the States and they are another feminist band that we are friends with and we really like their music.

J: We specify but usually it because those are the bands we happen to like most. We have also played with Measles, Mumps, Rubella who are guys but we really like what they sound like so that worked out, but predominately we do play with mostly female bands, queer bands.

K: They are usually part of the political scene or something.

Nat: With the new album you've got a much more electro feel to it. One thing I've noticed with a lot of female bands is that they do tend to move more into the electro/indie sphere of things rather than punk. Do you feel that too?

J: I guess I don't know that many hardcore or traditional punk bands. There's The Haggard and Sleater-Kinney are like a rock band but they are not Hardcore.

Nat: I mean do you think there's a kind of push to move into electro or is it just something that happens.

K: I think a lot women are getting interested in making electronic music by the nature of how you make it. If you haven't been playing guitar all your life, you can still pick up a sampler and learn how to use it and create your own style of music in this new millennium of electronic art.

J: I think probably a lot of male bands are experimenting with electronic music as well

K: It appeals to me because I like people to be able to dance and I think it's easier to dance to music based around a beat sometimes than it is to music based around a guitar and a bass line and the typical punk set up.

J: Also I tend to find the audiences more supportive, less violent and as I get older I'm just not up for the violence that I found sometimes in the punk scene and also the type of treatment I received there. I mean I think there's still a lot of work to do and I admire the women who want to stay within that framework and fight more for it but I just don't have the stamina.

Edd: Do you still think that women feel excluded from the punk scene?

K: I do! The treatment that I got in the punk scene was totally horrendous. Most of the male punk fanzines that I ever dealt with would ask me really offensive questions, and after I gave them an hour of my time they would write shit about my butt, what a bitch

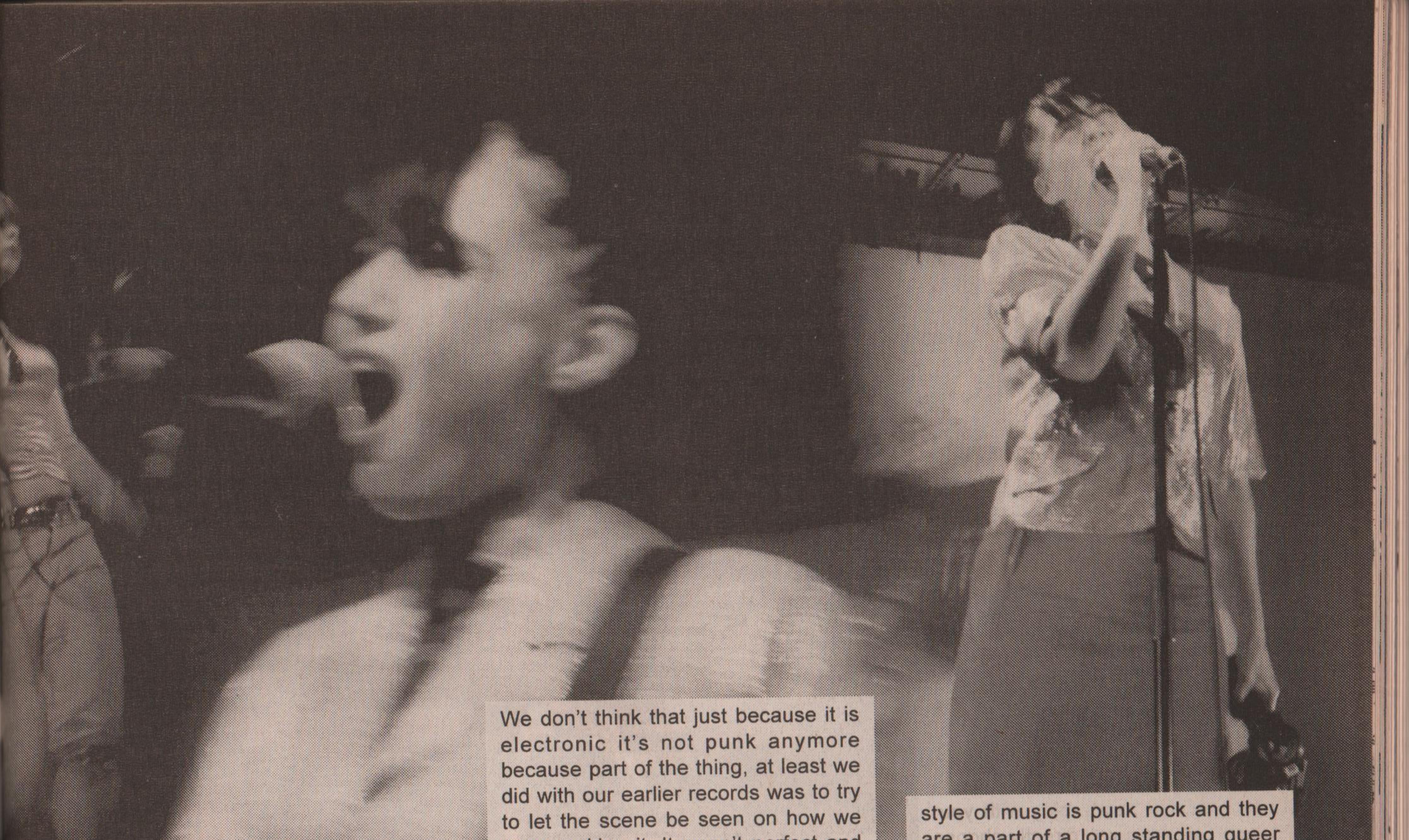
I was and how I loved to hate men and all that. There would be punk guys who would come to our shows and yell stuff at us for years and years and years. It doesn't mean that all punks are bad or anything like that. I think there is sexism everywhere.

There is sexism in the electronic music scene too, it's just maybe circumvented into a different location or something. In a way I always liked it at punk shows that people felt that they could speak up even if it was a message that I particularly didn't enjoy like 'take your top off.' I at least liked the fact that it is an audience where people felt that they could speak up and that's definitely something that I kind of miss a little bit. I just wish that that engagement didn't have to be so sexist, but I can't really speak for how other women feel. They might feel completely and entirely welcomed.

JD: There are other punk scenes that have developed that aren't sexist, like queer punk scenes and there are still feminist punk bands like The Haggard and even like The Gossip. They play like in the corner in clubs in a punk rock setting, and there are a lot of places where women have the option to go without the misogyny.

Nat: I think I was just trying to see if you guys thought there was any kind of relationship that meant that those scenes remain sexist because niches get carved out in the peripheral and women get pushed into.

K: Well I can see maybe, what you meant. There used to be the stereotype and there still is that it is cool to have maybe a girl bassist in your band and maybe that has changed to a girl keyboard player. I guess because I like experimenting



with sampling and electronics and other genres then I see that as a positive thing. It's something that I'm interested in so it's hard for me to see it as something that women are pushed into as a role that they don't want to be in. I think there may be something to what you are getting at as far as the feminisation of certain instruments or certain styles.

Edd: Do you think it's also partly because women feel that they couldn't join bands because they didn't have the friends who would take them seriously enough to start bands which is something I've read in things written by some women.

K: I think that is defiantly a very astute observation. I know lots of women that we have met on tour that have echoed that same sentiment and have come up to us or written us letters and said that they, 'Really, really want to start a band but I can't find anybody to play with and blah blah blah'. And next thing you know they send us a cassette of their electronic music they made on a four track.

I think also with your other question I think I was assuming you were talking about punk, meaning like a specific larger punk scene. I do think there is another way to talk about punks, not just as a general music thing but as the ideology behind it. About everyone having equal access to music, which in a way is a very feminist idea and in a way the kind of electronic music we make, we call punk-feminist electronic.

We don't think that just because it is electronic it's not punk anymore because part of the thing, at least we did with our earlier records was to try to let the scene be seen on how we were making it. It wasn't perfect and you could really tell how we did it but that meant people could look at it and say 'oh I could do that or do better than that.' As we progress we can't make that same record again and stay immature forever or else it's a total flake out but I think there are other ways to be punk besides just the four piece or three piece band playing a certain kind of music. There are punk writers or whatever as well.

Edd: A lot of people do talk about punk as being a culture. Books have been written about it and things like that. Initially punk was supposed to be a counter culture or whatever, do you think it has now just become a subculture. It seems to not have so much analysis anymore about issues or problems or care as much.

K: I think it depends on which kind of punk you are talking about because if you are talking about the Warped tour or something like that, then obviously, or New Found Glory.

JD: In our feminist punk scene which included electronica music and classical music and all kinds of stuff the people seem to be constantly writing about politics and feminism.

J: Also Tribe 8, they are a lesbian band from San Francisco. I really consider them a punk band in every sense. The

style of music is punk rock and they are a part of a long standing queer punk scene in that area. [Sorry didn't catch name] wrote a novel just a few years ago and to me it was a punk novel. I think there are still people working within the aesthetic perimeters of what punk is seen as. I don't know. It's so hard to say. Do you judge it by what its aesthetic is fitting into or what it is historically referring to or ideologically or the attitude.

Edd: Going back to the point about using mainstream media to expose more people to your ideas, do you ever worry that they are just going to turn around and spit you out like they did to riot grrrl and all that total bullshit.

K: A lot of it is total bullshit to be particularly honest. The mainstream media will often times just have some cheesy 'Eye of the Tiger' headline and then pictures or whatever. They won't write anything that is super interesting or illuminating but at the same time if

people come to our music and then they go to our website and then they get all of the examples of great feminist writers that we wrote about in our favorite books category and all the stuff that we talk about. We try to skill share with other women about how they can make electronic music if they are interested. If we help turn women onto feminist books or if that article brought them there then fine. We can use them to bring them to us. And if through that it leads them to Tribe 8 and Bikini Kill and Bratmobile and a bunch of other bands that might just get swept under the rug in the next five years then that's great too.

Edd: You guys have done Bands



Against Bush. Is the goal to get people to elect Kerry. Is Kerry a real improvement on Bush?

All: Yeah!

K: It's the issue that all activists are working on with the most urgency because it really is urgent. I think that if and when Kerry is elected we will pick back up with the struggles we've always been working on and for. It's not like we're going to welcome in a radical new era with Kerry but we really need to get Bush out of office because we have an administration composed of war profiteers and big business people who want tax breaks for the billionaires. They think it's okay to murder people all over the world just to line their big accounts. And lie to everybody and to steal the election and to take away welfare and health care. It's really scary. Even though we are not necessarily in love with everything that Kerry might stand for or say it is really important for him to get into office. It's incredibly important and for people not to vote because he is not the ideal candidate, that's ridiculous and irresponsible to the rest of the world.

JD: And when have we ever had the perfect candidate?

Nat: At the same time though do you not

think it is important to focus efforts on activist and anarcho ideals, or has that gone away.

K: I think that we are activists in the sense that we are cultural activists and that we are interested in putting new representations of women into the world and forwarding a radical discourse about gender and community and anti-capitalism and all of this stuff. Also we are practical activists. We believe in voter registration and getting Bush out of office. I think that if you were to write out a list of everything we wanted for the world it would be far more radical than voting Bush out of office but it's kind of like there are these two levels operating at the same time. There is the practical level and the imagining the new world level.

I don't feel like in this time period I can afford to be a total anarchist. I think it would be wrong.

J: I think it would be wrong not to participate in the voting system. It would be irresponsible.

It's exactly what the right wing want is for people to turn away and to say I don't believe in this. It's like the 60s tune in-turn out, or turn in-turn out or whatever the fuck that was. If you do that I think you are just responsible for letting them win.

I don't like a two-party system anymore than anybody else does but I'm living within it and have to admit it. You're not going to just run in and steal food everyday because capitalism is wrong.

Nat: Apart from these kinds of politics but in terms of social politics how much further do you think there is to go to recognise equality in sexism in everyday terms and things like that?

JD: Well we still need to pass the law. We don't even have equal rights in the law. It's still a long way. A long long way unfortunately. But anyway, I think our time is up.

End Notes: Interview: Natalie and Edd. Artwork: Edd. Photos: Natalie or promo. Le Tigre have several records out. Our favourite is 2001's Feminist Sweepstakes. Thanks to the band for chatting to us. Apologies for asking another question about the 2004 US elections, but the dominant view that somehow elections actually mean something, or can change anything - at least in Edd's opinion - needs to be continually challenged!



RN: Obligatory intro, what's your name, what instrument do you play blah blah?

SEAN: Hey I'm Sean and I pluck the bass with my nimble fingers...

CHRIS: I'm Chris, I play the drums.

JAY: I'm Jay I do vocal duties.

ROSS: I'm Ross and I fuck about on lead guitar.

MAT - I also play guitar.

RN: Why did you decide to start a band? Was it a conscious decision to end up with the sound you guys have, or was it just from mucking around with each other?

JAY: I left WAR a while back and got invited to join another band with two friends of ours, Chris and Joe. I drafted Chris (the drummer) after he left WAR too and Mat who had just left the Narcotix (a local thrash band). Things didn't work out with the other two guys so we got Sean in and finally Ross.

ROSS: Jay found me through the private ads in his local phone box. He was initially interested in my 'other' services. However, I soon discovered that they were after a second guitarist in the band that went onto become Kill The Lights.

The sound was half conscious and half messing around at practice and generally liking the same sort of sound....

SEAN: From my point of view, I'd been looking for a band that had motivation to write songs and play as many gigs as they could. Not some half arsed band that does it as a hobby, I dedicate most of my time to the band, as do the others, because I love it, simple as that. Musically we all come from punk backgrounds, be it Crust, Street, Pop whatever, we progressed into hardcore through punk and think that shows through in our songs. We just write what comes out

and if it sounds like a certain sub-genre of music then so be it, it's not a conscious decision for us to write a hardcore tune or a punk tune we just go with the flow of the music. Mainly we try not pigeon hole our band, it gives us a lot more room to breathe concerning gigs and scenes... We'll play anywhere you ask us!!!

CHRIS: With regards to the sound we have, we try to take as many ideas as possible from all the different stuff we listen to, but mixing it up enough so one song isn't a totally different style to the next. I think that's the problem we had when we started where one song would be really fast hardcore and the next would be melodic punk or something. I think we're just starting to find our sound now and getting that mix just right. At the same time we do make a conscious decision to try and do something new and different, which doesn't always work out but hopefully that should come with time.

RN: Less overtly political than War Against Reason, again was that intentional?

SEAN: Ask Jay, word!

JAY: Yes it is. The issues written about in WAR are still important to me, but I felt the way they came across was a little naive - I had a lot of people (many good friends of mine) misinterpreting many of the actual lyrics. With Kill The Lights, a 'social agenda' has not been scrapped per se, merely the lyrics have been written for a wider personal interpretation. They are ambiguous in places on purpose.

MAT - I feel that the lyrics we've produced are less in your face and to the point as opposed to previous bands we've been in.

4: Do you think you are just preaching to the converted at punk shows, or is there the possibility of changing people's opinions at gigs, or is just a place to hang out and dance with friends?

SEAN: I don't input much into the lyrics but from my perspective I go to gigs to listen to live music and have a laugh. If someone says something on stage that I agree with then it's a bonus, however most of the time it's the "Hey man, this scene is so great! Don't loose it man..." kind of thing, not that it's bad like, it's just been said about a million times before, we all know now!!! So in answer to your question I see going to a gig as just a place to hang out with friends and watch some quality music... sometimes...

ROSS: I think it's both really. Obviously, if you're at a punk gig you're highly unlikely to have wildly differing views to the bands that are playing, but I think it's a healthy environment to share and discuss opinions, but at the same time, gigs are gigs you know, not political rallies, and when the preaching drowns out the music that's when you've got to worry.

JAY: As with WAR, people can think about or interpret the lyrics in their own time listening to the record. At shows, we just want to enjoy playing for the fun of it and encourage people to do the same. In terms of a 'crowd', we like to think that KTL is breaking down barriers between what is now essentially a very categorised music scene. We play a lot of shows with lots of different bands, and we like it that way - though I think that there is an opportunity to just go crazy and have fun that is not being exploited by people who turn up to see us! I get people say to me all the time

that they wanted to sing along or dance or whatever, but don't have the guts to do it because everyone's standing around trying to look cool. That's not what Kill The Lights is about – we enjoy getting up on stage and going crazy for the fun of it, if people want to join in, the more the merrier!

RN: Kinda connected to the above do you think that politics has a place in punk 'n' DIY in 2004?

SEAN: Yes I do, politics is always going to go hand in hand with Punk, it just up to you what you listen to.

ROSS: The day politics loses its place in punk is the day punk becomes completely inconsequential.

CHRIS: Yeah, definitely, but I find it loads more interesting when bands find a new way to sing about politics, in a way that's not totally in your face. I think bands like Strike Anywhere and The Nerve Agents did this well.

JAY: Now more than ever. Despite our ambiguous lyrics, there is a fine line between writing meaningless songs about nothing in particular and writing words that mean something to you or the band. The world is changing, and not for the better, and I think more people need to educate themselves about it. Signing up to direct action and other underground movements is not the only way to solve the world's problems; you have to begin with yourself.

RN: You guys have kept it pretty DIY putting the demo out on your own label, booking your own shows etc. Is that something that's important to you as a band and individuals?

JAY: I believe it gives us the flexibility we want as a band – as for the E.P, it's a demo, and we thought we'd just put it out in a limited run on my own label. I think it's whatever works best for the band really.

ROSS: Most definitely. The punk scene is tailored in a way that it's easy to do things your own way and not answer to anybody else. To ignore that opportunity would be stupid.

SEAN: Indeed! I get such a good feeling from knowing that what we're doing is ours, we're the ones who decide what we do and when.

CHRIS: I doubt anyone would have wanted to put the demo out for us, especially seeing as we'd only done around 5 gigs, so keeping it DIY was the only way

really, although it took a hell of a lot of time and effort making them. I wouldn't say keeping it DIY is particularly important to me, as long we get to keep our flexibility to do what we want. We're all at college or university or have jobs so we don't get the time to tour or anything like that. Booking our own shows just lets us do what we want when we want.

RN: Talking of the label, how's that going, is it all of you who run, or just Jay? Any plans for other releases?

JAY: Rise Again is a small label run in my free time, I have had friends and girlfriends (ta Lucy!) help out with bits and bobs but essentially it's my own label. I've put out 3 releases out so far, most of which is sold out, but I've still got copies of my compilation for anyone that wants one – it's got unreleased/new/whatever tracks from bands like The Filaments, The Freaks Union, Morning Glory (Leftover Crack side project), American Distress (ex INDK), Send More Paramedics and a bunch of other stuff too. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my clandestine partners in crime, without their efforts none of this would ever have happened – Kyle, Jesse and Mark, three friends of mine from the USA and Australia who have helped me put the release together and made sure it was a reality, as well as all my friends who helped me track bands down and got them on.

I intend on merging with Kyle's label Intlicup Records who have just put out American Distress' album for future projects. An online shop and distro is opening up in the future at Intlicup.com, we're still beta testing a few things but it's getting there.

RN: You seem to have received quite a bit of attention – especially up north – why do you think that is?

SEAN: Surprisingly our best gigs have been down south, I think it must be the long distance travelling or something! The gig we played for you in London was one of the best experiences I have ever had, and my favourite gig to date was the Norwich show!!! It took us 6 hours to

get there, but it was so worth it, the reception was boss, the promoter Mike was a complete legend and adventures were had after the gig. All good!

ROSS: I think it's mainly down to the fact that we seem to be doing something a little different. That's the general consensus I've got from people I've spoken to. Obviously, we're not particularly original in the sense that punk and hardcore bands have done this in the past, but in the current climate I'd say we stand out somewhat. Whether it's for positive or negative reasons is entirely up to the individual!

CHRIS: It's kinda weird because when we go down south people seem to have this perception of us that we're quite big up north, which is totally untrue. The few gigs we have done down south have been amazing, the crowds seem loads more welcoming, and don't just stand still the whole set which is a nice change from up north. I think the reason we've received a bit of attention is just that we play loads of different shows with different styles of bands so we get a bit more exposure than we would if we just played hardcore shows or whatever.

RN: So what does the future hold for Kill The Lights?

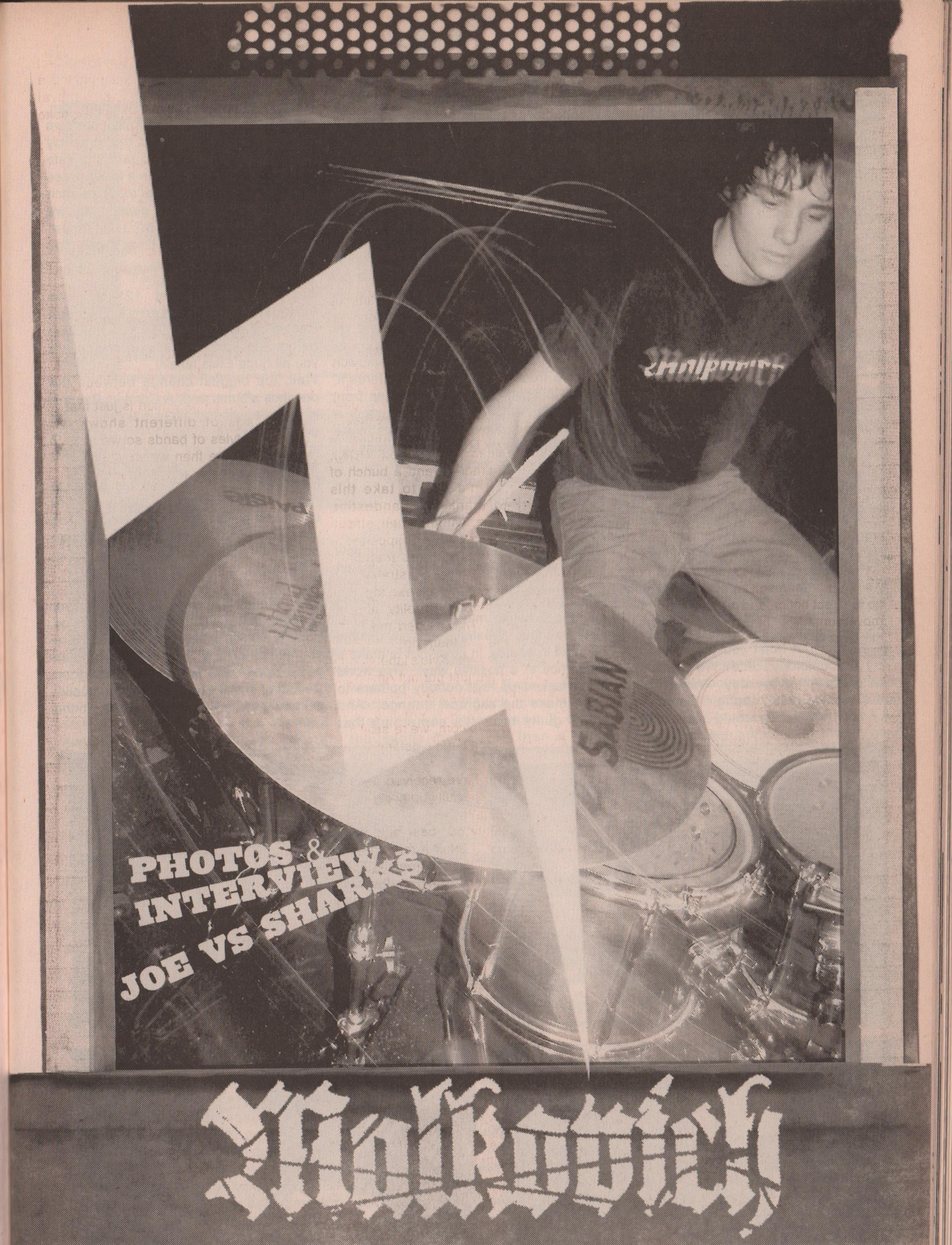
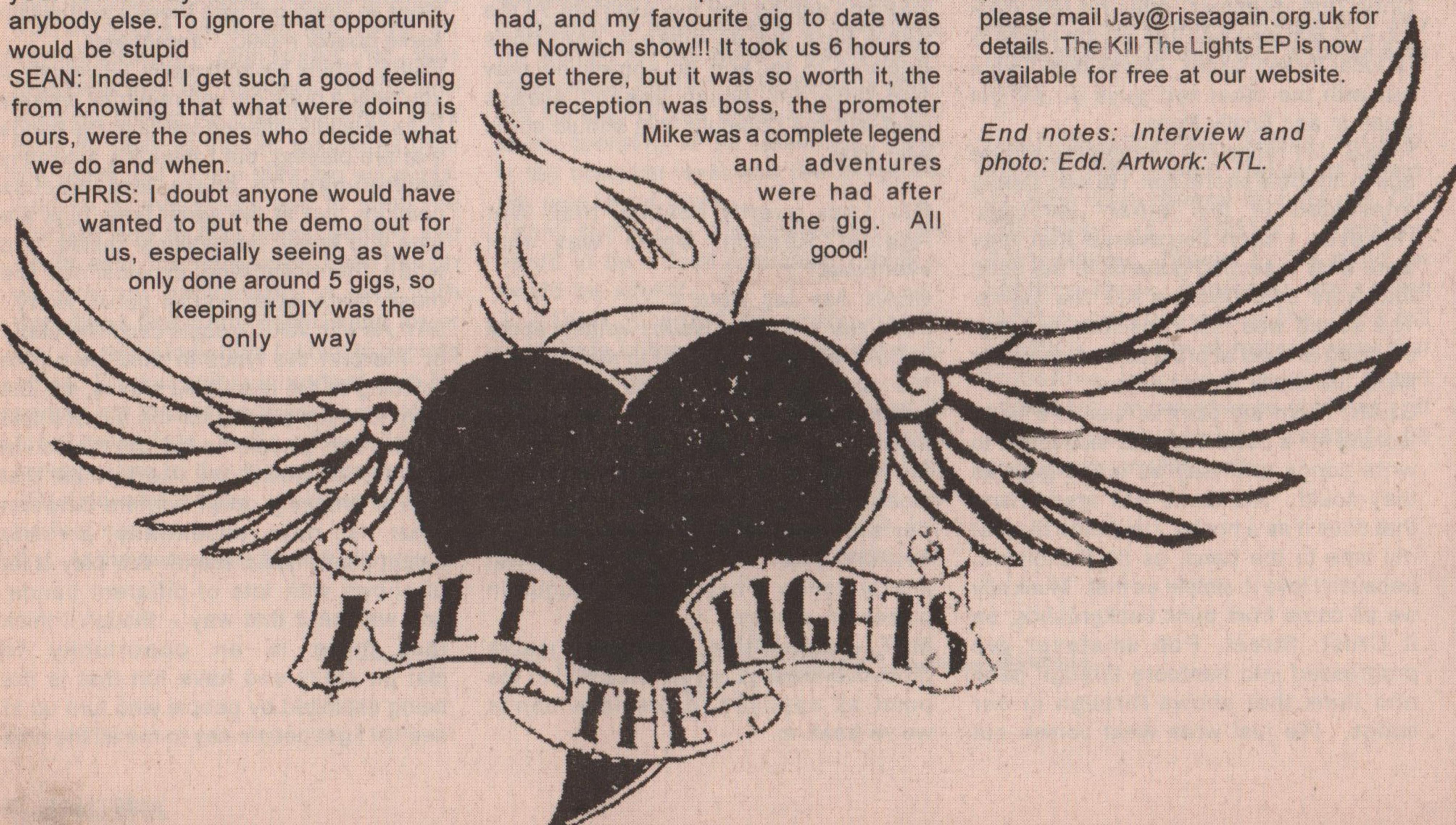
SEAN: We're heading into the studio again near the end of October for a possible split MCD with Hearts (love you guys!) so look out for that! More gigs to follow, check out our website, www.riseagain.org.uk/killthelights or add you're self to our MySpace profile at www.myspace.com/killthelightsuk. Cheers for all the support and we shall see you on the flipside...

ROSS: Immature antics, Sleepless In Seattle and taking the piss out of Jay. Other than that, some gigs I guess.

JAY: Thanks to Edd for his interest and continued support for the band – it's good to have an example of a project that's completely DIY go places, and there are plenty of other zines out there put out by people who deserve the support. Rock 'N' Roll!

If you want to mail about the compilation (reviewed in Rancid News 7) then please mail Jay@riseagain.org.uk for details. The Kill The Lights EP is now available for free at our website.

End notes: Interview and photo: Edd. Artwork: KTL.



AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO PUT MALKOVICH ON AT THE HORSESHOE IN PORTSMOUTH...IN MY OPINION IT WAS THE LAST GREAT SHOW THERE. MALKOVICH STRUCK ME AS BEING REALLY GOOD PEOPLE AS WELL AS A MIND BLOWING BAND, SO I E-MAILED THE BAND SOME QUESTIONS (WHICH TO MY KNOWLEDGE THEY ALL ANSWERED).>>>

So, who is in Malkovich, come to think about it, why Malkovich? Is he the perfect human example? (Con Air was underrated!):

Currently Malkovich is: Huge O (vocals), Jozef (drums), Markovich (guitars), Dax Mol (bass) and me, the Motherfucking Penguin (guitars). We've been doing this shit for four years now, first we had Kidkablam (of Face Tomorrow fame) playing the guitars and Markovich was singing. We kicked Kidkablam out because of his Absinth-addiction in September 2002 and fired Markovich as a singer and hired him as a guitar player at the same time. Huge O was the only motherfucker who was bad ass enough to be called the new Markovich front man.

Why Malkovich? Because some Belgian techno-fucks already decided to call themselves Buscemi, so we were stuck with this name Malkovich. He's far from the perfect human example, dude. He's bald, has an annoying accent and is far from being as sexy as the five of us are!

You don't seem to be a band that takes themselves too seriously (with you sweet-ass shell suits & bunny rabbit bass player), Do you think it's important to have a sense of humour in a scene that is so serious... and tough?

Definitely, but don't you think this is a very and humorous scene? We're laughing our pants off every day. We do take ourselves seriously though. Because if we didn't Malkovich would have been a

joke, and I guess jokes don't run this long. We have a fresh outlook on how to do things, and there's definitely a lot of humour and cynicism involved. It's a way of making people notice our band, and it works, man. It really works.

With all five of you living in different parts of Holland does it make practice/ playing & socializing difficult? What is the average distance between you all? Does this put a huge strain on your friendship and life as a band?

Well Holland is a small country and we don't really live that far apart. Huge O Dax Mol are from filthy Amsterdam, Markovich & I are from murder capital Rotterdam, which is about 100 Km separated from each other. Jozef lives in Delft, which is somewhere in between, and that's where we practice every Monday, because we see each other mostly at least twice a week (at rehearsals and shows), the socializing is not really affected by the distance.

Can you tell me a little bit about your new CD, what issues will we find covered on it?

We, the Earth dominating, highly developed, white man, who lives his/her life as a robot. Western humanity drowns its head in apathy, in order not to make a difference in a positive way. This world is so fucked up, but nobody bothers to even make the slightest change. And we're guilty too. It's something that

fascinates me a lot. We, the western man, are not even able to dare to live our own lives in a way that would really satisfy ourselves. We choose to take the safe road that has been trodden a billion times before. Why is that? What made us such apathetic cowards? Is it genetic, are we brainwashed by the system? I don't know, I have no answers. But it's a mighty fine topic to write lyrics on.

Comparing your first 12" to "The Foundation Rocks" and "A Criminal Record", it seems more Rock 'n' Roll than before. Is this a conscious choice are you all huge Elvis fans?

Well, the biggest change between the previous albums and "A Criminal Record" is that we were all more involved in the writing process. That has definitely influenced our sound. We're not big Elvis fans, but we certainly like THE ROCK. More than anything we like our songs to rock. More than before our songs are structured as classical rock songs. The vocals are definitely way more catchy than before. Damn, when I come to think of it, WE ROCK!

With bands like Das Oath & JR Ewing breaking through in America right now, do you feel the desire to tour there yourselves or are there other countries you'd rather visit first? Does being on Reflections make it easier to tour now? Oh and when are you coming back to the UK?



To answer the last question first, we're doing 4 UK shows early December [this was obviously in 2004 so you missed it, suckers!] with our main gangstaz in Razor Crusade, the tour is currently being booked so I have no idea where we will be playing?

I'm not sure if being on Reflections has made it easier to tour, well it certainly got us on the Modern Life Is War tour this June. But during the years we've built kind of a network with lots of different contacts that make it easier to tour for us, and Reflections are just one of those contacts. We're certainly planning to go to the U.S. too, hopefully next summer.

Bands such as the Bronx play kinda similar music to you guys, have been getting vast media coverage, do you think the whole "Rock 'n' Roll hardcore" sound is the next big thing? If it did take off and you were offered a major label deal, would you do it or is being independent important to you?

Being independent is important, but not being on a major label doesn't mean you're independent per se. I think you can still be fairly independent while being on a major label, to me, a band can be totally punk while going on a major label adventure. It's important to get the best deal for yourselves, but if you have the urge to make a difference as a band on a political/social-critical level, I'm convinced that you have to use the mass-media to make a statement against them. It's the only way to start the fight and have a chance of

winning it. A band like Rage Against The Machine has had much more influence, changed way more views & opened thousands more eyes than a million independent punk groups together. It's a conscious choice to make and you have to be aware of it, but being on a major label doesn't automatically make you the bad guy in my eyes. So to answer your question, we would rather end up on a good major label deal than a fucked up independent label. And if rock 'n' roll hardcore isn't the next big thing yet, WE are going to make it that. That's for sure.

I'm curious to know how Das Mol feels playing in an otherwise all male band and a predominantly male scene? Over here in the UK there are very few women directly involved in hardcore & even less actually involved in hardcore bands, are things different in Holland?

Things aren't very different in Holland, I think it's the same everywhere. There is always a fair amount of girls at shows but very few girls do labels, zines & bands. I've been involved in hardcore for around 9 years now & I've never understood this. Personally I don't mind at all being the only girl, I feel very comfortable around men & although the H/C scene can be pretty macho, I've never felt threatened by this. In contrast I don't really like initiatives such as "Ladyfest", etc... I don't believe in the idea of girls separating themselves from boys to make a point. To me it's just a matter of sex, the

way I feel about music and about being in a band is no different from a boy. On tour I'm practically always the only girl, but it has never been a problem for me, my band members or other bands we tour with. Sure, it can be exhausting to suck a lot of dick every night, but apart from that it's always great fun!

You strike me as an "arty" band, not in a pretentious way but you all seem very cultured & into art/ design (not many bands have screen-printed handbags!) & Thomas...you do all of the Malkovich art work. Is art an integral part of the Malkovich experience?

Well I don't really think we are an arty band. We have our own tastes and interests when it comes to art & movies & stuff but it is important for us to stand out, not only through our music but by the visuals involved. People tend to call that "arty" but I don't really agree on that, we just like to look good as a band... in fact we're not arty it's just plain vanity.

Any last words or John Malkovich film recommendations?

Not really any film recommendations. I just want to say thank you, Joe, for this interview. And those of you who are still ignorant of Malkovich: check us out now, or be the laughing stock of your friends and enemies.

End notes: Interview & photos: Joe Vs Sharks. www.iammalkovich.com.



I'm not entirely sure when I first hear about Evasion, but I do remember it was to the sound of loud arguments and disagreement within the 'activist' scene, to an even greater extent than CrimethInc normally manages to create reaction. Intrigued I picked the book up and set about reading. I didn't really see what the problem was. It wasn't like the kid was telling people what to do, just recounting what he'd done. Regardless, the interview came about after I realised - by reading an interview in HeartAttack - that Mack (the person who wrote Evasion), was actually contactable. About 12 months after sending the questions, I'm finally laying out the interview. It's been worth the wait though!

RN: Ok, well I guess a fair few people reading this won't have any idea who or what Evasion is, so do you think you could give an intro to how the zine and then the book came into existence? Sorry I know that's always the first question you get asked!

Mack: I wish I was tired of the question, it would mean I did more interviews. Thanks for getting in touch... The first Evasion communiqué was brought into the world in a most raw and ungracious way as a rough, handwritten, 108 page photocopied zine written in my darkest hour. I made 50 copies which I gave to friends and people I met travelling over the summer, and put Evasion to rest. For one year the master copy sat unused, and I moved on to other projects.

Unknown to me, the zine was rapidly breeding a thousand heads within the DIY punk community. It began when the band Zegota stole one of the first 10 copies I made from the home of a kid I had given it to in Little Rock Arkansas. They took the zine on tour and distributed thousands of copies. Kids made copies of those copies, and in a year the world had thousands of poorly reproduced, 4th generation copies of Evasion. The first hints of Evasion's proliferation came in my email inbox (I had never given Evasion the dignity of a PO Box) 9 months after its completion, when I began receiving a windfall of emails. It was no small surprise to learn that from those original 50 copies had grown to 5,000 or more others. For someone with little confidence in his own skill, or the strength of his stories, it was all a big shock. And it continues to be. Paul Maul, CrimethInc's eccentric and bearded man behind the scenes, soon got in touch and wasted no time in offering to put out a book, if I would write it. The whole exchange, from first-hello to book offer, took three emails.

After many months living in a broom closet, eating little and writing a lot, the Evasion book was finished. It was released in early September, 2001.

RN: There seems to have been a cult of personality that's sprung up around the "Evasion Kid", and the obligatory backlash that's bought about. Were you surprised at the level of notoriety that the book, and you as the author, received?

Mack: I was always the kid no one cared about one way or the other. In school, in the punk scene, anywhere and everywhere since my first breath. So being abruptly thrust into an odd position of having

thousands of kids you've never met have an opinion of you — after 20+ years of being ignored by nearly everyone — has been a strange ride. There have been fistfights and winks, banishment from whole towns and many of my long time heroes suddenly wishing to be my friend. A very strange ride. I woke up the other day and an Evasion critic had scrawled a mean note on a street sign outside my house. Imagine it: Someone you've never met making a covert overnight strike on your home.... I scratch my head over these things daily.

RN: Are you surprised about the amount of flak that you've received from both the activist community and punk rock community for being well dressed and SxE?

Mack: Not long ago I was at Gilman St., a well known DIY punk venue in Berkeley California. The band Good Clean Fun was playing, and one of the opening bands was a rather monotonous grind band to which I paid little attention. Before their last song, I hear the singer say — "This song is about Mack Evasion, sitting in the back of this room. We're still punks, and you're still a chump!", then blasting through a 20 second grind song — about me. After their set I of course dragged the kid outside and asked him what his issue was. He told me I wasn't punk. I asked why. He said - "Just look at you." This is the level of critique I'm up against. So clearly it's easy to laugh off. What surprises me is that these kids go so far out of their way to embarrass themselves.

The whole buzz about a kid who wrote a book for CrimethInc, a kid living the "anarcho punk lifestyle" and having no interest in either looking the part (dreadlocks, Carharts, etc) or identifying with "anarcho punks", has caused me much amusement. A lot of slanderous talk, cold shoulders, and hurt feelings from kids who want me to be the poster model for "the squatters struggle" or some such nonsense. While Evasion was never written for "crust punks" or anarcho-scenesters, it has unfortunately been appropriated by these crowds, and there has been much critical talk that has followed. I don't wish to sound divisive, or draw an argument along scene lines, but it is an unfortunate window to the soul of a scene when you find yourself cast out for keeping your hair short and wearing a Vegan Reich shirt. These scenes (anarchist, pseudo-activist, etc) are as conformist as any other, maybe more so. Frat boys are allowed more range of fashion and lifestyle than most CrimethInc kids. You could say I'm pretty much "over it." I'll find my friends elsewhere.

Straight edge: Exclusion for being straight edge is as old as straight edge itself. I feel very fortunate to be rejected from any crowd as degenerate as the "get drunk and have sex" party crowd. Goodbye and good riddance.

RN: Have you received similar flak from the hardcore scene? There's the cliché that it's just full of white suburban kids who are too obsessed with themselves to think about others. Have you ever felt alienated from it because of how you live and survive, and your unwillingness to just 'grow up and get a proper job'?

Mack: The Hardcore scene has taken a

huge swing towards the right in the last decade. What you describe, while it may be largely true in 2004, was certainly not in 1994. White and suburban perhaps, but certainly not apathetic. The scene was a very volatile one of potent ideas that spearheaded a large animal rights movement, among other achievements. Despite the current climate of apathy in Hardcore, I would say most of my mail at this point comes from straight edge kids. This keeps me feeling that while I may feel alienated overall at most hardcore shows, there is still a small but strong political sxe scene. Sxe has been and will be a scene of change, even if bands like 18 Visions would like to run it into the ground by way of makeup and tight pants. Overall I feel that the "take back your life" ethic is still very alive in the sxe scene, and that my writing remains very accepted by that part of sxe that still has a brain. You have a lot of sxe kids who aren't content just "growing up and getting a job". I got a note from Tre who co-runs Deathwish records the other day, he's been sxe since dinosaurs walked the earth, and now he's running a record label and doing exactly what he wants. Scott Beiben of Bloodlink Records is sleeping on my floor right now, he's been sxe since any of us knew what it was, and he hasn't worked since 1992. There are sxe kids working full time on the Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty campaign, being documentary filmmakers... it's an endless list. It's not Hardcore kids I feel alienated from, it's boring and uncreative people... no matter what scene they're from.

RN: Do you think that if say Soft Skull, or another independent publishers had printed Evasion rather than CrimethInc, that it would have been received differently?

Mack: The short answer is "Yes". The long answer is oh god yes. There is no question. The CrimethInc affiliation is at the core of most people's misunderstandings of Evasion. Nearly all critiques fall flat when it is understood that Evasion is a personal narrative. This is not CrimethInc's master blueprint for total liberation. CrimethInc's presence in the anarchist movement made Evasion translate — in the minds of most anarchists, activists, and punks — as a "Days of War, Nights of Love, Part II". You can call it an oyster milkshake, it doesn't mean that's what it is. When Evasion was a zine, I never heard a bad word about it. In book format, Evasion was the round hole in which to fit every square peg opinion you could toss at it. It was the great punk Rorschach test. If you were a labour right activist, Evasion was classist, if you were transgender, Evasion was that rotten book that didn't represent you once in its pages.

To drunk punks, it was "that straight edge book". It was like the punk scene had one shot at telling the story of its lifestyle, I had won the lottery, so therefore the rest had to tell me how I should have written it. Lunacy, and I credit all the drama to CrimethInc's clout. CrimethInc was the best thing that could have happened to my work, please do not misunderstand. There is no other publisher in the world that would have brought Evasion to sell 16,000 copies. The volunteers at CrimethInc HQ spend all day putting my book into



SOMETHING HAPPENED WHEN WE QUIT OUR JOBS, QUIT PAYING RENT, QUIT PAYING FOR ANYTHING. AND I THINK BACK TO THE EARLY DAYS, WHEN, LIKE CLOUDS PARTING TO REVEAL THE SUN, WE DISCOVERED WHAT WE WERE TOLD HAD BEEN LIES, THAT IT COULD BE DONE, AND THAT IT WOULD MEAN THE TIME OF OUR LIVES.

Shoplifters

HAVE MORE

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Ad

envelopes, and for this I am grateful beyond words. Evasion's relative success is entirely a riding of the wave created by earlier Crimethinc releases like Days Of War and Harbinger. At the same time, Crimethinc works against a clear understanding of Evasion by influencing an expectation of overt politics. Of being the manual that will set everyone free. If someone can show me the memoir that does that, I'll take my retorts back. But right now, all I have to say to the kids who spit their venom: Those that can, do. Those that can't, critique.

RN: Why did you turn vegan, and did you find it hard to sustain this lifestyle when you started to skip and steal your food? Likewise what are your opinions on freeganism, since it seems to be a slightly contentious issue among 'activist circles' at the moment?

Mack: It was never an issue of what was "hard". Not being vegan was never an option. It was no harder for me to be vegan than it is for me to not ride a purple elephant to Mars. It's not an option, and thusly not a struggle. Freeganism is a euphemism for weakness, a tag for kids who care nothing for animals or the earth but like to keep up the pretence they do. In a vacuum, isolated in time and space, there is no harm in eating animal products from a skip. It is waste and therefore out of the supply/demand cycle. However it quickly breeds a casual attitude about eating animal products. I have yet to see one person who has gone from vegan to freegan, who has not very shortly regressed to omnivore. If I could see just once someone maintain their ethical code of not harming animals and keep to a strict freegan "skips only" diet, I might be swayed on this. But as I've seen it play out, I find freeganism to be a disgraceful attempt to keep up an animal friendly front while trodding slowly down the path to selling out altogether.

RN: It seems - from reading Evasion - that you're fairly unconcerned about where you take your food from, and what products you steal (i.e. you seem to steal from health food shops, and organic produce) which some people might have a problem with. The argument running that though the little health stores still a business it's not as bad as the Asda down the road. Do

you have any views on that?

Mack: There is a cultural gap here that needs to be addressed. In America we have a large, corporatized "Natural Foods" industry that does not exist in England. We have chains like Whole Foods, which is the fastest growing grocery chain in the country, it is almost totally organic and has an amazing amount of health food/organic/vegan options. While England is a decade ahead of the US in terms of a consciousness on animal agriculture and food politics, it appears that we have moved a little faster in the creation of a market for "natural foods". So when I talk about stealing organic produce, or vegan, fruit juice sweetened donuts, I am doing so from some of the largest supermarket chains in the country. The only profit loss in shoplifting comes at the retail level. The companies whose food is stolen actually make more money, as the store must order one item for every one that is stolen. So there is no loss to the food companies, only the chain that sells them. In Evasion, I was very sure to impart an ethical code regarding shoplifting. For example I gave an account of living on a boat in a small town for two weeks, and the slow starvation I endured rather than steal from the town's only grocery store (a small independent market). So in fact I am very conscious of these things, and wish others would be as well.

RN: Have you come across punkvoter.com yet? What are your thoughts on it, does it worry you that "punks" are trying to bring about social change through the electoral process?

Mack: I am not aware of the site. My wish would be that people would not give voting any more faith for creating change than, say, putting up a sticker or writing a message on a bathroom wall. It gives the illusion of change. The advent of electronic voting machines which are easily manipulated, and for which there is no paper trail, further erode the integrity of the electoral process.

RN: Finally you're currently working on the new Evasion book, what have you prepared for it, when's it gonna see the

light of day, and are you going to be doing any printed work beyond the scope of Evasion #2?

There is so much on my table right now. The first draft of the next Evasion book is complete. Right now I am looking for a publisher, which I've never had to do before so the process is moving slow. The next book will be a 75,000 word epic account of six months spent living in the broom closet on the campus of a major university. My fingers are crossed for a late winter 2005 release.

Mack: Just out are a small mountain of new Evasion zines. Evasion #2.9, which is a short collection of material I never published, plus first draft excepts of the next Evasion book. Evasion #2 is the number I have assigned to another just completed zine, which is a handwritten zine version of the Evasion book-only material — finally in a format I prefer after losing much of the text's personality to type in the Crimethinc book. Also included is a new layout and intro/outro material. Evasion #2.75 is a short precursor to a future project, which will be a (I hope) bound book on the mid-90s vegan sex scene, featuring interviews with figureheads from that era. I have taken the first two interviews completed for this project and put them in a short zine (Evasion #2.75) as a taste of what's to come. It's a "coming out" issue of sorts, as I am still thought by most who know of Evasion to be one of the kids who panhandles for beer money outside gas stations and listens to Against Me. I enjoy passing the zine out at shows and hearing the confused responses. Also I have revised and re-released the original Evasion zine from 1999, which contains about 10 pages cut for the book. Just for fun, I've also screened Evasion shirts and had a friend do a website where all of the above is available — www.xevasionx.com

Future: New Evasion book. Evasion tour documentary titled "Suburban Jihad", Evasion #2.5 supplement (no stories, all practical advice), the Evasion scrapbook issue (100 pages of first draft stories, hate mail, etc), and further down the road — taking things to an all new level. What comes at that point is going to rock the foundations.... The storm is coming.

End Notes: Interview - Edd. Images: Evasion. Buy a copy of the book from Active Distribution (active-distribution.org).

Evasion

RESIST G8

Introduction to the G8

The G8, or Group of Eight, is a group of the seven most economically powerful countries: France, United States, Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada, (known collectively as the G7), plus Russia. The current President of the European Union also participates. The G8 was established to re-align national social structures in accordance with the growth & dominance of global capital.

The group has met every year since the six largest economies first met in 1975 in Rambouillet, France to discuss the economic crisis created when the United States abandoned the gold standard, resulting in floating currencies. Canada joined in 1976, the European Union in 1977, and the participation of Russia was included over

How it affects us

To maintain social order, these decision-makers rely on coercion & compliance & ultimately the use of state forces to retain their control. Under the cover of the war against terrorism, the group of 8 will take the opportunity to prescribe a powerful police force in order to keep its stranglehold around the borders of the 'free world'. It is not often that the notions of political asylum and freedom of movement are allowed to circulate around the corridors of power.

Anti-immigration politics have been re-

period of time starting informally in 1994 and concluding with formal inclusion in 1997 at the Summit of the Eight in Denver.

While initially focused on macroeconomic and trade issues, political issues, such as security, development, nuclear safety, and terrorism have over the years become more important. The G7 continues to meet without Russia before each G8 Summit to discuss economic issues. The G8 has also created a series of ministerial forums which meet at the Summit and throughout the year on specific topics, including Trade Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Finance Ministers, Environment Ministers, and Labour Ministers.

The G8 considers itself a discussion forum only. However, nothing happens in formal international organisations (such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank) without the prior consent or active support of the G8. The

sponsible for several hundred deaths of all ages and serve the mafia networks which feed the traffic of individuals and maintain a state of tension. The G8 leaders also can be found at the UN Security Council or at the heart of NATO whose role is to organise the militarization of the world, and to defend the economic interests of the multinationals. And so the G8 fulfills a tripartite mission of organising the economy, the police and the military, allowing them to maintain their hold over entire populations. The mobilisation of organised masses outside the summits of

overall direction of policy which comes out of the G8 also has a significant impact on these organisations.

The G7 countries control the most powerful international financial institutions. Voting power at the World Bank and IMF is determined by the level of a nation's financial contribution (one dollar, one vote) and the G7 holds a total of 45% which results in an effective veto on decisions. The true power at the World Trade Organisation lies with the informal "Quad Countries" of the United States, Canada, Japan, and the European Union.

The G8 meets every summer in advance of the September meetings of the World Bank/IMF and the November Ministerial of the World Trade Organization, so that decisions made at the G8 impact the policies set at these meetings. The G8 is essentially a means in which the power of a few individuals can be maintained with the consent & collaboration of both capitalism & state institutions, & that power used to control, manipulate & ultimately govern as a global authority.

this world government makes it necessary to alter 'our' communication network. 'They' need to disarm their critics by integrating the least radical fringe of the movement and criminalising the actions of the most subversive elements. All the major powers fear popular direct action, the autonomy of social movement, the means of functioning at odds with the logic of power.

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Go events leading up to the summit in July

February 1-3, 2005 – Scientific Conference on Climate Change, Exeter, UK

February 4-5, 2005 – G7 Finance Ministers, London

March 10-11, 2005 – G8 Employment Ministers Meet Meeting, London

March 15-16, 2005 – International Energy/Environment Ministers Roundtable, London

March 17-18, 2005 – G8 Environment and Development Ministers Meeting, Derbyshire, UK

June 11-12, 2005 – G7 Finance Ministers Meeting, London

June 16-17, 2005 – G8 Justice and Interior Ministers – Meeting, Sheffield, UK

July 6-8, 2005 – Gleneagles Summit

Contacts & groups:

www.dissent.org.uk

Local groups:

Brighton - brightonantig8@yahoo.co.uk

Bristol - dissentbristol@subsection.org.uk

Cambridge - cambridgeaction.net

Derby - derby.earthfirst@hushmail.com

Edinburgh - reshape@riseup.net

Glasgow - reshape-glasgow@riseup.net

Hastings - blueecomag@netscape.net

Ipswich - atgbblue@yahoo.com

Lancaster - thebasement@webtribe.net

Leeds - leedsarc.org.uk

Leicester - leicester-action.co.uk

Liverpool - chogmail@excite.com

London - wombles.org.uk

Manchester - dosummat.org.uk

Newcastle - whydontyou@post.com

Nottingham - veggies.org.uk/sumac

Oxford - dissentoxford@riseup.net

Reading - reading-anti-g8@cyberrights.net

Sheffield - sheffieldmayday@ukf.net

Worthing - shuttheg8@hotmail.com

Other people:

SchNews - schnews.org.uk

Corporate Watch - corporatewatch.org

Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) - brightonabc.co.uk

Indymedia - indymedia.org.uk

Peoples' Global Action - agp.org

The Clandestine Insurgent Rebel

Clown Army (CIRCA) - clownarmy.org

Earth First - earthfirst.org

Disarm DSEi - disarmdsei.org.uk



Nearest towns to Gleneagles

Stirling: 20 miles south of Gleneagles via A9 road

Perth: 20 miles north of Gleneagles via A9 road (15 min by train)

Glasgow: 45 miles south west of Gleneagles via M80 road (1hr by bus)

Edinburgh: 50 miles south east of Gleneagles via M9 (1hr 15 by train)

A brief history of anti-G8 summits

Birmingham (UK) 15-17 May 1998.

Despite G8 leaders meeting since 1975 this was the first time a mass mobilisation occurred against the G8. Some 70,000 people (mostly organised by Jubilee 2000) formed a human chain around the summit. Another 8,000 people took part in a robust RTS street party (as part of the Global Street Party against the G8). Many consider this the beginning of the 'anti globalisation' movement.

Köln (Germany) 18-20 June 1999.

The infamous 'J18' where the City of London financial centre was closed down & people ran riot (literally) through the streets. Billed as 'An International day of action, protest and carnival aimed at the heart of the global economy' it was one of hundreds of planned actions in 43 countries around the world.

Okinawa (Japan) 21-23 July 2000.

An altogether subdued affair from Europe although 27,000 people surrounded U.S. Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan.

Genoa (Italy) 20-22 July 2001

Probably the biggest, most successful & most violent mass demonstration Europe has ever seen. Hundreds of thousands, from every country, from every political

This text was originally printed for the South East Regional Resist G8 Assembly. This South East region meeting was initiated & hosted by groups & individuals who describe themselves as 'anti-authoritarian'. Essentially this means we reject the notion of hierarchy & leaders. We emphasise collective decision making based on consensus, self-organisation & autonomy with a commitment in taking direct action against the G8 and what it represents. This initiative is part of an ongoing social struggle for all of us to take our lives back into our own hands.

MIKE PARK

FOR THE LOVE OF MUSIC

shows to go to. That was how it started.

RN: When did you want to start doing stuff yourself?

MP: I think the band that made me want to play was a band called Fishbone. I saw them in 1986, and they were just so amazing. That made me want to play music. It was 1987 when I started being in a band, and then it was in 1989 that Skankin' Pickle started, and I started touring and that was it!

RN: You said you went to Gilman St. when you were younger, how big a part of the scene was it back then?

MP: Well, it was a place for us to play. (laughs) Skankin' Pickle just couldn't get any shows and Gilman St. was one of the few places that we could get a show. It's an important institution for so many people, even to this day. Unfortunately, as I grow older I'm not going to as many shows anymore so I'm not as involved as I used to be, but I still play there. I'm playing there in a couple of months.

RN: Oh yeah with Dan Potthast?

MP: Yeah and Chris Murray. So yeah it's a great thing to have, for kids to have this punk club, where you know it's not about capitalism but it's about music.

RN: Were you involved with it at all when you were younger?

MP: No I just really went to shows. I went to one meeting and that was it. (laughs) The whole time I was there!

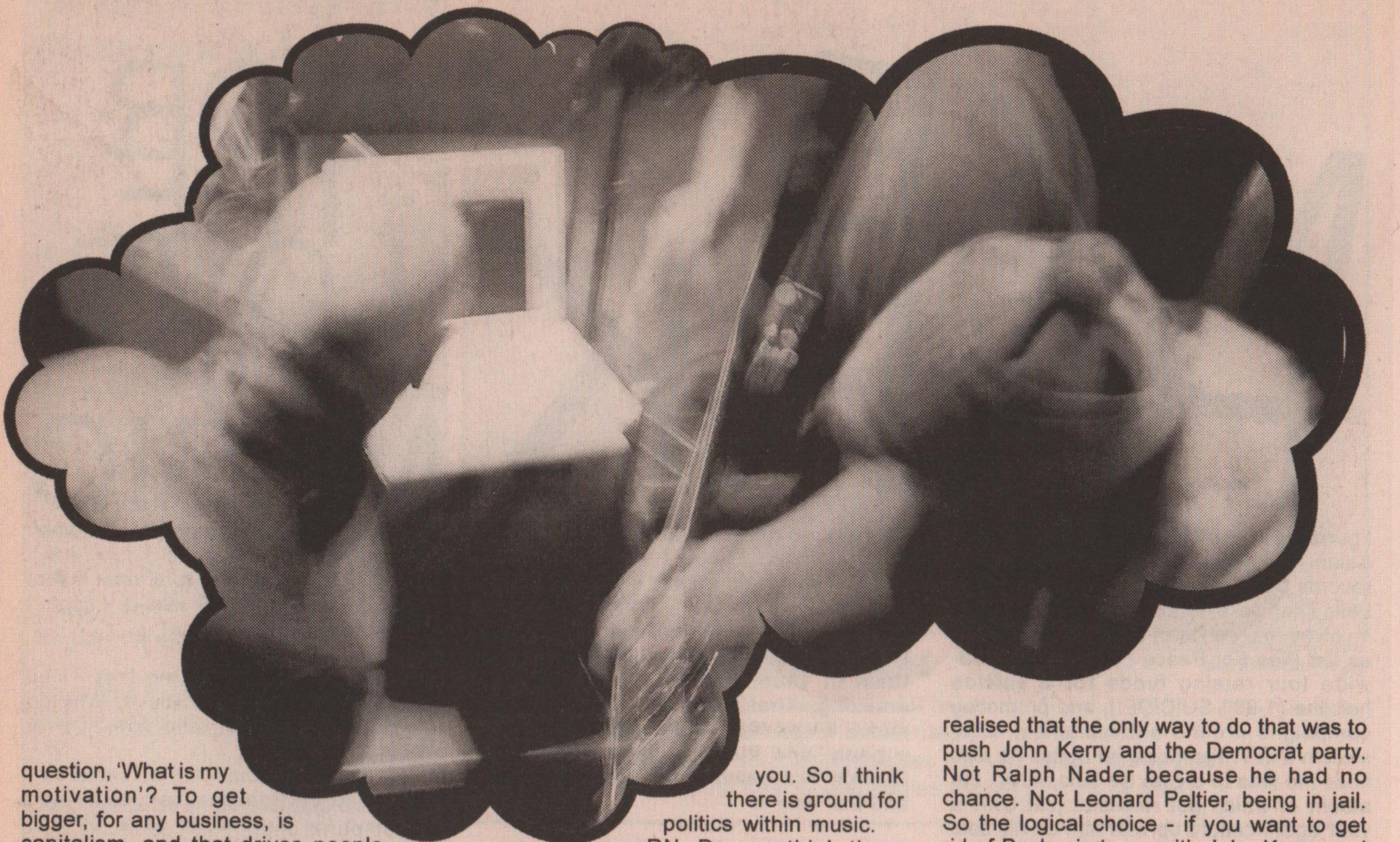
RN: People always assume that Asian Man's bigger than it actually is. Why do you think it's like that, and does it ever annoy you?

MP: It definitely annoys me, because I think of the expectations that people who don't have the punk ethics have. So your everyday kid, who has no idea, and just likes a popular band, orders one of our CDs, but they have no idea how much work goes into it. It's not an assembly line. It's a one on one thing. So I get frustrated in that sense. But I understand the reason that they think it's big because we've put out bands like the Alkaline Trio, we put out their first three records. The Lawrence Arms, Kevin Seconds from Seven Seconds. There's a lot of great stuff that we've put out! But I think that's where the confusion comes from.

RN: You've always said that it's deliberate to keep it in your garage and keep \$10 CDs. Is that just because you don't want the added stress of being bigger?

MP: Yeah. It's just more headaches. And the bigger you get the more you have to





question, 'What is my motivation'? To get bigger, for any business, is capitalism, and that drives people to get bigger and succeed more, and I never wanted that to be part of my life. So long as I'm able to support my employees - I'm down to just one employee now (laughs) - and myself then that's all that matters. That's why I've chosen to do things the way that I have done. I think there's a need for people to do that, so that consumers understand that it's not always just about dollar signs always it's about... What's the word I'm looking for? It's about nobility and the ideal of music as art and not as profit.

RN: Do you think it's possible to be big and still be doing it for the music, or is that it just makes it that much more difficult?
MP: I think it makes it more difficult, but I don't think it's impossible. I don't question anyone's integrity. This isn't a dis on any other label that's big. This is just my own personal opinion so, this isn't to downgrade anyone. Be it Fat Wreck or Epitaph, this is not to say that they're not in it for the right reasons. It's just my opinion that I can't do it under those circumstances. There's just too much involved.

RN: How come you became involved with Plea For Peace?
MP: I just feel like the consciousness side of music is lacking in everyday life, and again it becomes just a conglomerate of money, and to see that was really depressing. And I felt there was a need to mix the two together - music and politics. So that was why Plea For Peace was established.

RN: Do you think it's possible for the two to co-exist, cause there's a lot of people that say punk should be apolitical?
MP: Yeah, absolutely, there's a place. The whole history of music has been political. Whether you're political or not it doesn't matter, it's not to say that non-political bands are bad. You can sing about anything, and that's cool. But if you're able to use your art and influence people in a positive manner, then I say more power to

you. So I think there is ground for politics within music.

RN: Do you think there can be change through music?

MP: I think most definitely. I think it happens the whole time. It can happen in the positive and the negative ways. It can bring you, on a sad day, if you hear a song that you enjoy that's from your past, it can put you in a good mood, but it can also put you in a bad mood. It can bring out violence, some of the more tense music just makes you want to fuck shit up. Or it can make you want to do good things. It's different. I've come out of shows thinking, 'Wow that was amazing'.

RN: What did you think of punkvoter, and what they did?

MP: Yeah I thought it was great.

RN: Were you involved in it at all?

MP: I was one of the first members of the Punkvoter board chairmen's thing. And I did the punkvoter tour right before the election. I played with Anti-Flag. I was very supportive of what they were doing.

RN: Do you think it failed?

MP: No, I think you only fail if you don't try.

They tried and therefore they succeeded.

If this is on a personal basis with Fat Mike

then he succeeded because he tried. If he knew in his heart that he worked with all his effort, and tried, then you can only commend him. If he knew something that passionate was in his heart, but he didn't try, then he had failed, and would have been silent. So for the world to see what he was doing, you can only applaud him, and give him praise for his efforts.

RN: There's fanzines like MRR and this one though that have been saying that Punk Voter was simply a tool for the Democrats and that it wasn't promoting any real change.

MP: The thing is, with the history of politics, there's been a history of complaining and badgering about people who are trying to do something different. Mike's only goal was to get a change of office, whether it had been Donald Duck or Snoopy. He was just trying to get Bush out of office, and he

realised that the only way to do that was to push John Kerry and the Democrat party. Not Ralph Nader because he had no chance. Not Leonard Peltier, being in jail. So the logical choice - if you want to get rid of Bush - is to go with John Kerry, and that's what he did!

RN: How come the solo album took so long to come out, you'd been promising it...

MP: For years! (laughs) I just didn't have time. That was the thing. Going back to your previous question about the label, I had to choose, 'Okay, do I want to play music, do I want to just be a business man?' I wanted to play music also, but running the label interfered slightly with me doing that, and I just couldn't find time to do it.

RN: Does that mean that other music projects, like the Bruce Lee Band, are on the back burner?

MP: Yeah, I've found it hard to do anything! But I just recorded the new Bruce Lee Band EP, and I'm going to be recording the new solo record in January. And then I'm going to be doing something with the Chinkees, I'm just not sure what!

RN: Yeah, because I heard that you guys [The Chinkees] were doing another album, is that true?

MP: Yeah, eventually! (laughs)

RN: Have you started writing any songs?

MP: For the Chinkees? Not yet! But I'm pretty prolific at song writing so I'm pretty sure that I can get at something good. I will start working on it next year.

RN: You do all the music though right?

MP: Yeah, I do all of the music.

RN: Why did you decide to do a solo thing then?

MP: It was a time issue. I realised the only way that I could tour - and play places like here in London - was to do it solo. I don't have time or the money to gather all the band mates and bring them all over, so my next best option is to do it solo because this way I can do small DIY shows. Tonight there might be about 20 people here in London, which might be dispiriting for some, but I feel appreciative. It's great. I'm here in a different country, able to play music. And I've never been on the radio. I've never been on the TV. This is all word

of mouth, so...

RN: So solo's more out of necessity?

MP: Yeah, I'd love to be in a band, it just takes so much time. It's like a relationship. A band is like a girlfriend, or boyfriend, and if you don't have the time to give to the band, it's not fair to them, or that relationship.

RN: Why do you think everyone's suddenly started doing solo stuff though?

MP: I don't know. That's what I'm wondering. I think it's because there's been a little bit of success so people are saying, 'Oh, I should try that!' But that wasn't the situation for me, I'm playing solo out of time and necessity.

RN: Do you think that solo stuff can be as good as a band?

MP: Oh yeah, definitely. I've seen solo artists who have blown me away. The bands just have so many different styles than just being 'acoustic'. There's protest music, there's singer/ songwriter stuff, it's all different.

RN: Your solo album did come out on Hopeless didn't it?

MP: Yeah.

RN: How come you put it out on Hopeless?

MP: I just didn't have the time! (laughs) Yeah just not having the time.

RN: So it wasn't down to not wanting to be accused of focusing too much on your own project?

MP: No. It was just that I didn't have time. And I thought that it would be a better place for it. That way I'd still be able to concentrate on the label and give other bands attention.

RN: Do you think that bands are better off on a major than an indie?

MP: It depends on the band, it really depends on the band! Everyone has a different situation, and I don't know their situation and what will fit them better. Like a band such as Fugazi; if they were to move onto a major label, it would kill them.

But then there's a band like Jimmy Eat World; it makes sense that they're on a major label.

RN: Did they not sell more when they were on an indie?

the third wave of ska - British ska - had come to America, peaked, influenced American bands, had died out, and all those bands went, but left an underground movement that got started. And it was really big with the Rude Boys, the Mods, the Skin Heads. It was big in the US! Late 80s, early 90s it was a really big underground thing.

But then bands hit, like No Doubt, Reel Big Fish, Less Than Jake. And now they're on the radio, on TV, so every kid in America sees this image, and says, 'Oh I'm going to start a band', and you just have complete over saturation of ska bands. Where it once was a minority, it becomes a majority, and it becomes over saturated, and destroys the integrity of the music, because everyone's trying to do it, and everyone gets burnt out on it, and it destroys that music. It's like emo. The word

emo: No-one wants to be associated with it anymore. No-one goes, 'Oh I'm in an emo band'. Whereas four years ago it was the underground, cutting edge music. But now it's got over saturated, and no one wants anything to do with it. So ska basically broke down, but now it's building itself up again.

RN: Over here the punk scene is pretty male dominated, and still has quite a lot of sexism within it, is there the same over in the States as well?

MP: Sure. But in America, and in the American punk scene we've been lucky and had this strong feminist movement. We had the Riot Grrrl movement, we still have Lady Fest, and women like Kathleen Hannah, Le Tigre and people are still kicking ass. So there's definitely women with power over in the States.

RN: That's cool. I was reading old interviews of yours, back in '96, where you were saying that Skin Heads were a big problem for you guys down in California. Are they still an issue?

MP: They're still there. They just don't go to ska shows any more. They go to Street Punk shows, and Northern Soul shows.

RN: I kind of think that's it.

MP: Well if you think of anything else feel free to email me!

End Notes: Interview and photos: Edd. Thanks to Mike for chatting with me. Check out asianmanrecords.com for info on the bands that he's involved in and hopelessrecords.com for info on Plea For Peace and his solo records.

EXETER BODY PIERCING

Whatever its origins, body piercing and punk culture intertwined somewhere in the annals of history. However finding a studio you're happy with can be a frustrating search. In addition to being a completely vegan company, Exeter Body Piercing is one of the most professional and friendly studios in the south. I got a chance to interview Nik, the studio's senior piercer in December.

RN: How long have you been piercing and how did you get involved in it all?
Nik: I've been piercing for nearly 10 years. I started out but getting piercings done myself when I was at university in Manchester. The woman who did my piercings heard that I was going to be moving back down here and asked if there was anyone doing piercings down here. I said no, so she asked if I wanted to be trained? And I said, ok.

RN: So you're originally from Exeter?
Nik: I'm originally from Liverpool, but my parents moved to Newton Abbot when I was about 7, and I lived there till I went away to University.

RN: So you were the first studio to start up down here.

Nik: Yeah

RN: Is it good being in Exeter, I mean, with the university is there a kind of liberal culture?
Nik: Um, Exeter University's a bit posh really, and Plymouth's moving back down to Plymouth.

RN: Really? I always thought it was weird that they had a campus here.

Nik: But that's the art part, which was quite good for us. We've got Exeter College, which isn't too bad. When I started out down here, which was... nearly 9 years ago, I was the only person doing it - and was for quite a while - so I got all the business. But since then everyone's decided to do it. There's now 4 places just in this street doing piercings, which kind of dilutes it a bit, but I think there are more people getting pierced now as well.

RN: Are these the first premises you had?
Nik: No.
RN: Where did you start?
Nik: I started off in the back room of a shop, which is now Fantasy World - it wasn't then. I just had the back room, but I was only there for

about 6 weeks. Then I moved and I was in where Grooves You Like is, or Illusive Records it's called now. I was in there for a bit, and then I've been up here for 5 1/2 years.

RN: Did you move up here just because you had the money to, or did you more room?

Nik: I needed the space. This used to be a flat, and it'd been empty for about 4 years, so I said to the landlady I'll take on that premises and do it up for some money for you, so I got it quite cheap. It's nice for people when they're feeling a bit nervous to have space, and to not feel claustrophobic.

RN: Yeah the last thing you want to do if they're nervous is to be cramped in amongst other people.
Nik: Exactly.

RN: What do you think it is that attracts people to piercings and body modification and things like that?

Nik: Different reasons. It's quite a lot for fashion these days. There are obviously sexual reasons. Some people who haven't got any visual piercings I think just like to have it done because they feel like they're doing something naughty, without everyone having to know about it.

RN: Do you find that it goes through popularity phases? Like teenage girls coming to get their navels done?

Nik: Navel's are always popular, yeah. It depends. If someone famous gets something pierced, that becomes the one that everyone wants.

RN: Do you ever get people coming in and saying can I have the same thing that whoever's got done?

Nik: All the time. People saying want their lip pierced like Christina Aguilera, who has a stud but high up, which is kind of unusual. Normally if you have a stud you have it lower down. She started that phase.

RN: Do you think people who generally get stuff like that done, in a couple of years are going to think, either I wish I hadn't got it done, or go away from it, whereas the people who come here independently, there the ones to go on to get more & more?
Nik: I think it's probably fifty fifty. Some people come here to have one and kind of get addicted

to it and have a few more, whereas some people come in to have one, have it for a few years and take it out.

RN: Do you think it's an allure for some people because it can be offensive to others?

Nik: I expect so, yeah. You have a few people who come in, particularly young people, who have loads of piercings, and I think that sometimes can be a bit of an over-kill. I'm into the quality rather than quantity.

RN: Do you think society has a generally negative view of piercings?

Nik: Generally, probably yes. I was shopping in town the other day, and I might be being paranoid, but there was a security guard in one shop that I swear kept following me around, and it's really really annoying.

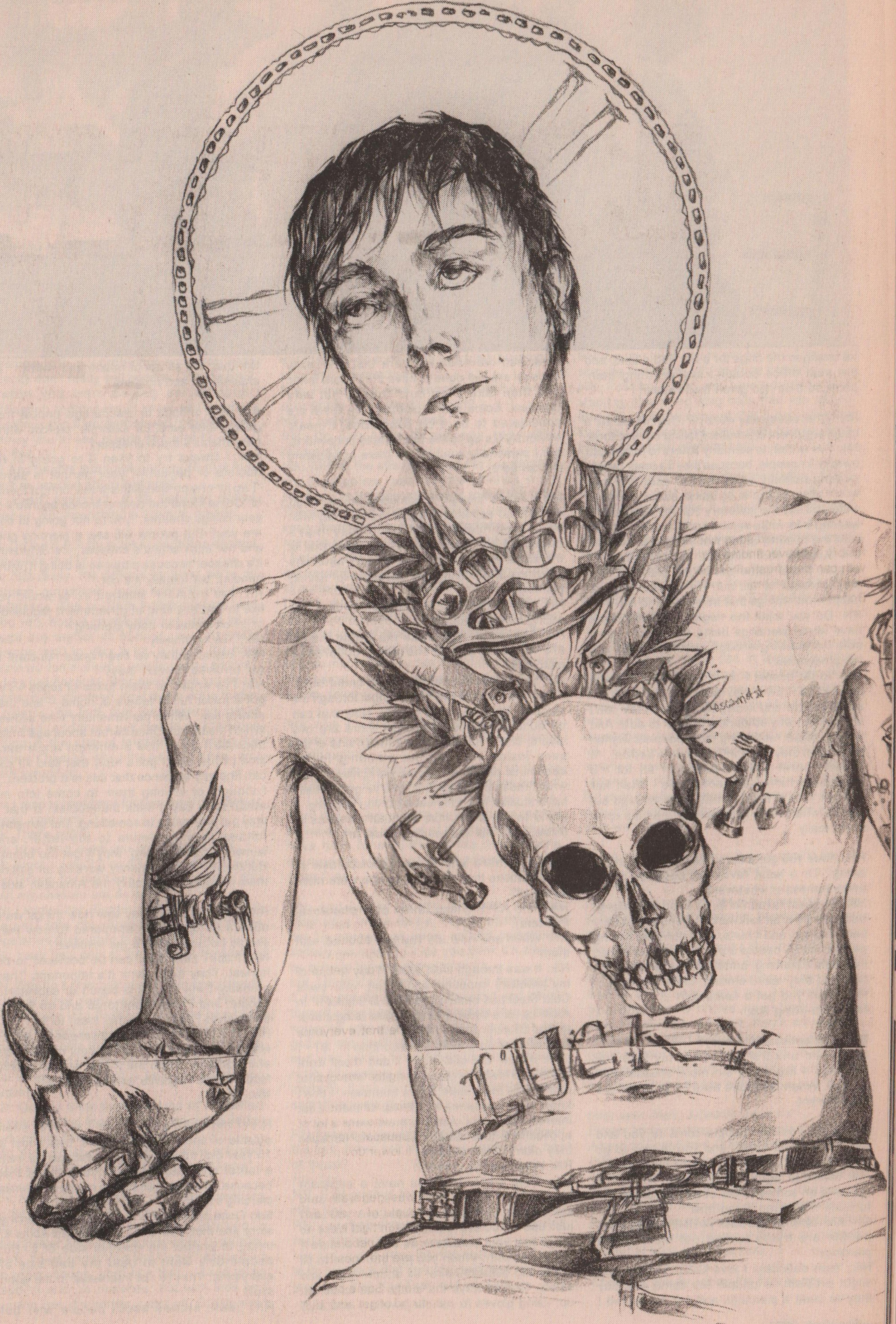
RN: So do you think it's unfair when people can't get certain jobs because they've got piercings?

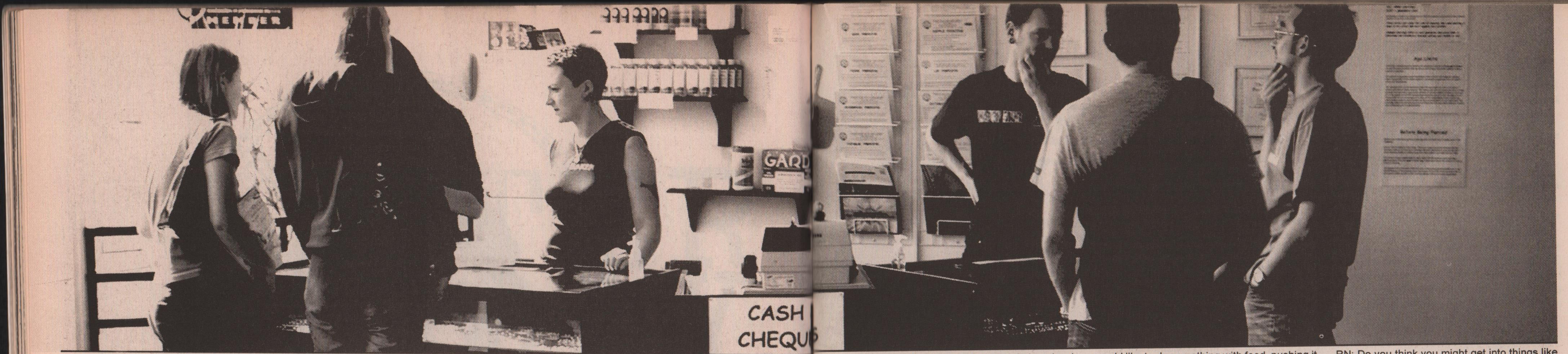
Nik: Absolutely. It's really weird because people will have had a job for ages, get a piercing - and it may be a job in an office where they don't see any public - and they get grief for it. Is it going to make them do their job any differently? Like they suddenly have a hole and their brain's going to fall out of it.

RN: Yeah, I know someone who works up in an office and got her nose pierced and got so much stick for it, even though it was the tiniest stud. It was ridiculous. She had to cover it up with a plaster...

Nik: Which makes it look even worse...
RN: Exactly.

Nik: I'm finding generally that noses are usually accepted now. Eyebrows are getting so they're not causing so much trouble. And lips are the ones now... because it began, when I started up, it was noses, where people were saying they were having grief from work and looking for smaller jewellery, then it was eyebrows, and now it's lips, and the others are just accepted now. I know the bloke that runs Cold Steel in London, and he had a customer who was a postal worker, who had a ring in his nose and a ring in his eyebrow, and the post office were giving him grief over it. And he said ask them why. So he asked why they didn't want him to have these piercings, and they said that if he was out on his rounds and they got caught in a branch, they'd be pulled and he'll sue them. So





he changed the rings for a bar and a stud, and the post office couldn't say anything then, because they had given their reason.

RN: What about, say waiters? Their employer's usual argument is jewellery falling out into food.

Nik: I've written to so many letters to restaurant owners for people, because they'll accept people wearing butterfly studs in their ears, but they won't allow barbells or labret studs. I always write and say the jewellery that my customer is wearing is far more secure and far more hygienic than the butterfly studs that you allow. I mean, if a butterfly stud falls out, the butterfly's full of crap that's come out of the piercing, and they're easier to fall out. It's far less likely to happen with things that screw on and clip in.

RN: Do you think the negative views people have about piercings being unhygienic come from not knowing enough about piercings and the procedures?

Nik: To be honest I don't think it's a hygiene issue at all. I think they just don't like it. I think some people find it disgusting, and they can't understand why other people want to do it. And instead of just respecting other people's wishes to do what they want with their own bodies... It doesn't harm anyone else. I'm all for - if something harms someone else - then fair enough, stop it, but if someone wants to go out and do whatever to themselves, then it's up to them really.

RN: Have you got a favourite piercing you like doing? Or a least favourite, because of it's awkwardness or whatever?

Nik: My least favourite to do is an ampallang, because it's a bit awkward to get the jewellery back through, and it hurts, and I don't like hurting people. Some people don't believe that! When I've done a piercing, and someone says it didn't hurt and they leave smiling, that's the best.

RN: Have you got a favourite?

Nik: I like doing lips.

RN: Just because it's easy?

Nik: Yeah, and it's just one of my favourite piercings. I like doing the more unusual stuff as well. When someone asks for something a bit different.

RN: Have you had people come to you and ask 'I'd like this done', and you've had to go away and look at something and come back?

Nik: Yeah that happens all the time. I did some implants on someone the other day, under the foreskin. I enjoyed doing that.

RN: Are communities such as BME useful when people are trying to find out more about piercings?

Nik: Yeah definitely. I love BME! Though one slight problem, is people will come and say they've seen a piercings and ask for it; and I

think half the ones on there that are really unusual are just done to have the picture taken and then take them out. They're not very practical. Some of the piercings on there are considered to be a bit dangerous. I mean, obviously it's up to the two people consenting, but I personally wouldn't go there considering the dangers.

RN: I figure though, if someone wants to go out and do something really extreme say with body modification, for me to say that's disgusting and you shouldn't be doing that is the same as someone who doesn't have any piercings at all saying that about me for having piercings.

Nik: Yeah, I mean, if people want to do it, I'm willing to read about it!

RN: The couple that make me cringe though are mandibles, and the deep collarbone piercings.

Nik: Yeah there are some that go under bone. There are some where they do right through the scrotum, right from side to side. Now that can be quite dangerous, because there are two layers, and if you puncture through one of the sacs inside you can get bleeding in the abdominal cavity, and cause peritonitis. That's what I mean by dangerous. You've got to really have studied it, and know what you're doing. It starts to get a bit more surgical on some of those, but I still like reading about it.

RN: Are there any other communities or organisations that you wish people were more aware of?

Nik: The A.P.P. (Association of Professional Piercers).

RN: When and how did you get involved with them?

Nik: It was through Cold Steel. They're one of my jewellery supplies, and Grant, who owns Cold Steel has been a member of the A.P.P. in America for a while, and wanted to bring it over to this country. So he, along with the America side of it set up a meeting in London in '97 - I think it was, the end of '97 - and there were loads and loads of piercers there. The upshot of that was there were 5 new members. I don't know what happened to the rest of them. Lost interest I suppose. Actually there were a lot of applications that weren't successful because they didn't fill the criteria.

RN: What are the criteria?

Nik: They prefer that you have a separate sterilisation room. You have to use cold sterilisation, ultrasonic and autoclave: you can't just use autoclave sterilisation. You have to spore test your autoclave as well, to ensure it works correctly. When you join you have to fill in this big questionnaire, all about health and safety. Certain ways the studio has to be set up; using gloves to handle jewellery and stuff

like that. It's all about health and safety... No anaesthetic and no guns.

RN: Is it difficult to discourage people from getting their ears, for example, pierced with a gun when it's much cheaper?

Nik: I always try to liken it to going to the doctors or dentist. If your dentist is saying 'Two for one on fillings this week, bring a friend,' or 'Come round the back entrance and we'll do your fillings cheaper,' you're not going to do it are you? But people will see a piercing price and not think why it's cheaper. It's different if it's cheaper because a trainee is doing it [with a needle], but usually it's not.

RN: Are the A.P.P. involved in, or would you like to see any kind of government regulation, or involvement in body piercing?

Nik: Yes, definitely.

RN: Because they've been quite reluctant to get involved haven't they?

Nik: I've written to them loads of times - I've got a folder full of letters at home - and they always say, 'When parliamentary time allows.' Which means no. Once I wrote about age limits, because I try to use a different angle each time I write, and I got a reply that said, 'If you can find any evidence that this is a problem...'

I thought of inviting them to come into my studio for a day. I think the problem is that if they put their name to something, and someone follows their guideline to the letter, and something goes wrong, they'll get the blame. But the A.P.P. is constantly working on getting them involved. Especially the American side.

RN: Do you think if they saw how things were done a lot of places, compared to how they should be done, they'd get involved?

Nik: I don't think they can be bothered to be honest. They don't think it's important. They probably think it's just a bunch of subversive people, and if they want to go and do that to themselves, then just leave them to it.

RN: Is it difficult to raise awareness, either with the government or otherwise, of piercings and practices, when the media seems to only focus on the negative aspects of it all?

Nik: Yes.

RN: I think the only article I've ever seen outside of specialist magazines, was about a 15 year old, I think, who got septicaemia from a labret and died. And everyone reads that because it's in the mainstream media and thinks piercing's terrible.

Nik: Quite often, when there's been a piercing story like that, I've been interviewed about it, trying to project the positive side of it. But people only want to hear the bad side of everything. They're not interested in the good stuff.

RN: Yeah, stories about people who get

piercings with no problems and they heal perfectly don't really sell papers. Coming back to what you were saying earlier about sterilisation techniques. I know you're really scrupulous about sterilisation and hygiene; does it annoy you to see places that aren't?

Nik: Yes.

RN: And people that have gone to studios that aren't as worried about hygiene?

Nik: Yeah, especially if it's because it was cheaper. Not everything's down to money.

RN: Do the A.P.P. try to take any action against places like that?

Nik: Not really. It's difficult because we're all piercers ourselves, busy running our own businesses. The problem is that piercers tend to be very hostile to one another, and a lot of things are matter of opinion, and piercer's opinions tend to vary a lot. A lot of the time people will come in with a problem with a piercing, and it's just because they jewellery is too small. That's really common. And that's not a matter of opinion, it's fact, that the piercing's being squashed. And that's just due to inexperience putting in the size of jewellery for when the piercing's healed, when the piercing's new, and there's swelling.

RN: I read somewhere that you're a completely vegan company.

Nik: That's right.

RN: How long have you been vegan for?

Nik: Since I was 21, so it'll be 14 years in July. And Gregg, my partner's 20 years vegan, and both my children are as well.

RN: I think Colin [Exeter Body Piercing's male piercer] told me Gregg's involved in the vegetarian restaurant in town, isn't he?

Nik: Yeah he's one of the chefs in Herbies.

RN: And finally: do you see body piercing

stagnating in the future, where anything that can be pierced has been, and it's completely socially accepted? Or do you think it'll always be outside the social mainstream.

Nik: I think it's always going to be developing. It might get more socially accepted, but I think there'll always be an extreme side to it. I know someone who pierces in Spain, and he's just getting into stapling. He came in the other day and was talking to me about it, and it looked really interesting. Like I said, I've been doing implants, that's my new things. There's always something new to get in to.

RN: I saw pictures of suspension pictures down the hall. Have you ever been involved in one of those?

Nik: No.

RN: Ever wanted to give it a go?

Nik: No!

RN: I've read experiences where it's sounded really interesting.

Nik: I'm kind of more into the aesthetics. Trying to do piercings that look nice and heal well, with jewellery that fits! That kind of thing.

RN: Do you think you might get into things like stapling more now you've done implants?

Nik: Possibly. Colin and I were talking about stapling. You need long bars that you shape like a Z, and the arms of the Z go under the skin and the main bit stays out. So you need long unthreaded titanium bars.

RN: Would you have problems getting things for that?

Nik: If I looked into it I could probably find them.

RN: Because some of the more extreme body modifications are illegal, so I guess it'd be difficult getting supplies for those.

Nik: Yeah, I don't know. Some people say that branding and scarification are illegal, but there are places that do it.

RN: There was an interesting story I read on BME about the disparities in things like that, with parents getting their sons circumcised when they're born, which is obviously completely unconsenting, and then people who want to get branding or scarification done, and are consenting, but can't because it's illegal.

Nik: Yeah I had a discussion with someone this morning about piercing baby's ears, and it's verging on child abuse really. Because if they fall over and hurt themselves, they hate to see it, but then they deliberately hurt them having their ears pierced.

RN: Is that because you think it should be the child's choice to have it done?

Nik: Yeah.

RN: Do you not think then in a way it's unfair to make your children vegan, because it should be their choice?

Nik: When they can make the choice they're free to do what they want. But I'm not buying it for them! If I do the shopping, I buy vegan stuff so that's what they'll eat. I'm hoping that by giving them a choice when they're older, even if they stray for a bit, they'll come back, because I haven't forced them. If once they've got their own money they want to go and buy something, I can't stop them, but I'm not buying for them while I do the shopping.

Interview: Matt. Artwork: Escarrot
Exeter body piercing can be found in McCoy's Arcard on Fore Street. Contact details and further information can be found on their website: www.exeterbodypiercing.co.uk. Information about the A.P.P. can be found at www.safepiercing.org; and information and inspiration about piercings, tattoos and other body modification (along with the occasional cringe) at www.BMEzine.com.

Cheers to Nik for taking the time to chat.

ID CARDS, NATIONAL DATABASES, AND OTHER SUCH STUPIDITY.

"There are serious people and serious organisations trying to destroy our society." - Charles Clarke, Home Secretary. You don't know whether to laugh or cry. "We are in a state of emergency." Which is all well and good except that for 99 percent (if not more) of us we're not. Life goes on completely as normal.

Terrorists can do a large number of things - though in truth they've been doing less and less, year on year since 1971. They can assassinate people, they can blow people up, and generally, you know, terrorise people. Last time I checked they were incapable of destroying a society. The only people who can do that are the society itself, and the politicians who claim to rule on their behalf. Terrorists can't remove freedom of movement, freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom to anonymity. Only politicians can. I'm far, far more concerned about what Charles Clarke and New Labour have in store than anything 'serious people' might have up their sleeves.

Mr George Churchill-Coleman - the ex-head of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorism squad - is unequivocal about what's happening. "I have a horrible feeling that we are sinking into a police state, and that's not good for anyone." Top of Charles Clarke's list towards a totalitarian state is the indefinite detention of "terrorists", but as Mr Churchill-Coleman adds, "I have serious worries and concerns about these ideas on both ethical and practical terms. You cannot lock people up just because someone says they are a terrorist. Internment didn't work in Northern Ireland, it won't work now. You need evidence."

Unfortunately though Charles Clarke appears to have been taking lessons from Burma, and now that the Law Lords have declared the indefinite detention in Belmarsh Prison to be illegal, he's going to put them all under house arrest for however long the 'threat lasts', except being that the threat of terrorism is constant that means there going to be sitting in their homes for quite some time. He's not content with just going after the "terrorists" though. Clarke now wants to make sure that their family and friends don't have any rights. Or at least they have the right not to use a telephone, or the internet, the right to be searched when entering and leaving the home of the arrestee and for their movements to be monitored.

It's Okay though, this may be the single greatest extension of the state since 1688, but, as Tony Blair has been quick to point, "It will not apply to anything other than a handful of people. It is important we put the security of the country first while recognising that there are civil liberty issues." And being that Tony Blair is a stand up, and completely honest guy, there's no reason we shouldn't all trust him. Likewise there's no reason not to completely trust the intelligence service, who are the ones providing the evidence. They may have got slightly confused over the issue of "Weapons of Mass Destruction" in Iraq, but they're back on the straight and narrow now.

A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL IDENTITY DATABASE

Then of course, Labour have been trying to extend the authority of the State more and more since they came to power in 1997. And their favourite policy is the, deeply Orwellian sounding, National Identity Database Bill.

There has been a lot of attention placed on the issuing of an identity card, but it's the identity database that is the primary concern of the National Identity Database Bill, the ID cards are a sub-point of this bill. This is important since its possible for an entry to be created on the national database, without the issue of an ID card, and without the knowledge of the person who's information it is made up of.

Never fear though because David Blunkett would like to explain. "I would like to reassure you, that the ID cards will not be used to build up a profile on innocent people or allow your private, personal information to be used without tight safeguards. The ID card will hold only very basic details, such as your name, address, date and place of birth, and a fingerprint or the scan of your eye, which securely establishes your unique identity. The ID card will hold just enough information to help us in the fight against crime and no more." Which is all very nice, except it's deeply misleading, because he's again muddying the water around the difference between the database and an individual card. And the database (as fig.1 on the next shows) will contain a lot more information than Blunkett is claiming.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), which was published alongside the bill asserts that "terrorists" will need an ID card, "to stay in hotels, rent

accommodation, hire cars, buy mobile phones, and generally carry out their activities." (p.13 of the document). This implies that we will have to use the ID cards for these purposes.

Don't worry though because the rest of the time you won't have to carry the card around with you because the police, and other authorities can do a 'Card Not Present' check, where they take a piece of biometric data (your fingerprint for example) and match it against the database.

Then again Blunkett seems to have believed whilst he was Home Secretary that non-use wasn't really an option. Quoted in Hansard he advises, "The issuing of the card does not force anyone to use it, although in terms of drivers or passport users, or if service - whether public or private - required some proof of identity before expenditure was laid out, without proof of identity and therefore entitlement to do it, I doubt whether non-use of it would last very long."

There is added concern with the £40bn being spent on an IT 'modernisation' program within the NHS: The 'National Program for IT' (NPfIT). The NPfIT will include a national database of medical records of all the NHS patients. At present the government is stating that patients anonymity and confidentiality would be retained, but the National Identity Database, in article 30, has a provision to connect the two databases by connecting the individual numbers together. In other words the National Identity Database would also contain, or be linked to, your health record.

What happens in five years time when the government decides it needs some more money so relaxes the rules surrounding the National Identity Database a little to allow private companies to buy your information? Is it fair if an insurance company revokes a policy after seeing a patients medical record?

A line of argument has been, much like Tony Blair's above, that, 'Yes, there are civil liberty problems, but we need to fight terrorism, and this is a way to do it'. The problem is though even Blunkett has said in the Commons that "I accept that it is important that we do not pretend that an entitlement card [ID card] would be an overwhelming factor in combating international terrorism".

article: edd
art: chronic fatigue



INTERNAL AFFAIRS



To date there have been very few investigations into the relationship between terrorism and identity cards beyond the superficial. One investigation was carried out in 2004 by Privacy International who concluded that:

"The presence of an identity card is not recognised by analysts as a meaningful or significant component in anti-terrorism strategies... Terrorists have traditionally moved across borders using tourist visas, or they are domicile and are equipped with legitimatate identification cards.

"Of the 25 countries that have been most adversely affected by terrorism since 1986, eighty percent have national identity cards, one third of which incorporate biometrics. This research was unable to uncover any instance where the presence of an identity card system in those countries was seen as a significant deterrent to terrorist activity."

The ID Database Bill though will invariably increase the levels of identity fraud. At first sight it appears logical that a national identity system would combat identity theft. There is, however, a substantial body of evidence to show that the establishment of centralised identity can increase the incidence of identity theft. This is because of the centralised nature of the identity, and the identity number. In both Australia and the USA, where centralised tax numbers have been introduced, identity fraud has massively increased.

Then of course there's the bill. A snip at

"There will be no more information, in fact a lot less, and much less accessibility than there are for shopping cards at the moment." - David Blunkett. The following though is a list of what will be contained on the National ID database if it's created.

1. Name
2. Other previous names or aliases;
3. Date and place of birth, when the person dies, the date and place of death;
4. Address;
5. All previous addresses in the United Kingdom and elsewhere;
6. Times of residency at different places in the United Kingdom or elsewhere;
7. Current residential status;
8. Residential statuses previously held;
9. Information about numbers allocated to the applicant for identification purposes and about the documents to which they relate;
10. Information about occasions on which recorded information in the Register has been provided to any person;
11. Information recorded in the Register on request.
12. Photograph
13. Fingerprints
14. "Other" biometrics (most likely Iris recognition);
15. Signature
16. Nationality;
17. Entitlement to remain in the UK; and
18. Where entitlement derives from a grant of leave to enter or remain in the UK, the terms and conditions of that leave.
19. National Identity Registration Number;
20. The number of any ID card that has been issued;
21. National Insurance number;
22. The number of any relevant immigration document;
23. The number of any UK passport (within the meaning of the Immigration Act 1971) that has been issued;
24. The number of any passport issued by or on behalf of the authorities of a country or territory outside the United Kingdom or by or on behalf of an international organisation;
25. The number of any documents that are used (in some or all circumstances) instead of a passport;
26. The number of any identity card issued

just £3.1bn. Then on top of that we would have to pay £85 for our "enhanced" passport. That's of course if the government can keep within budget, which as history relates with failure with using technology with The Child Support Network, Passport Agency, Inland Revenue, Court Service, National Air Traffic Service, Criminal Records Bureau, local authorities, Ministry of Defence, Home Office, and the Prison Service (to mention a few), it won't be able to do.

The Identity Database Bill would radically change how the State, and its citizens interact. It will essentially remove the right to anonymity, or for certain aspects of our past to remain anonymous. Is it really fair - for example - for a caution over smoking weed at the age of 19 to remain on someone's identity for the rest of their life? Or if a woman decides to have an abortion, this would again be connected to the database for the rest of her life.

A network of opposition has already formed against the Identity Database Bill in the form of the Defy-ID network, and the NO2ID network. As the bill progresses, or becomes an act, the opposition will doubtless become more concerted. Visit either defy-id.net or no2id.net for more information.

The Serious and Organised Crime Bill

The story doesn't end with the Identity Database Bill. In December Blunkett entered an unprecedented number of 'law and order' bills. One of the most serious - in terms of civil liberties - is the Serious

and Organised Crime Bill, which will in essence be setting up a national police force, akin to the FBI in America to fight such things as the 'War on Drugs', and the myriad of 'serious people' that doubtless abound in Charles Clarke's head.

One group of 'serious people' are those pesky animal rights activists who are depressingly (for Lord Sainsbury - the Labour science minister) proving quite successful in their goals of animal liberation. So 'economic sabotage' is now going to be a criminal offence. Like the 2000 Terrorism Act, and actually most of the bills that have been pushed through Parliament since 1997, the bill is both open ended and deeply authoritarian. Nor does it do anything that previous laws didn't already do. The new bill stops people from causing economic damage to people who provide supplies to a company who has a long term protest against them. The bill aims at stopping animal rights activists intimidating suppliers of laboratories. Unsurprisingly this was already illegal. So whilst nothing really changes for the animal right kids (or the ALF as the government insist on calling them!), except to demonstrate that they're winning, it has changed other areas of protest. For example a group of students who petition their university to disinvest from Huntingdon Life Sciences (or Bayer, or Lockheed-Martin etc) would now find themselves on the wrong side of the law. Don't worry though, the Home Office says this kind of protest won't be "prosecuted". Probably because it's not nearly as effective.

by the authorities of a country or territory outside the UK;

51. Other particulars, in relation to each such occasion, of the provision of the information.

New offences / fines the Identity Database Bill creates:

1. Refusal to obey an order to register: £2,500 fine.
2. Failure to submit to fingerprinting and biometric scanning: £2,500.
3. Failure to provide information demanded by the government: £2,500.
4. Failure to attend an interview at a specified place and time: £2,500.
5. Failure to notify authorities of a lost, stolen, damaged or defective card: Up to 51 weeks in prison and/or fine.
6. Failure to renew a card: £1,000.
- ... 11. Providing false information: 2 years and/or fine.

For full lists www.no2id.net or www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmbills/008/2005008.pdf

LA's Internal Affairs are clearly one of the best hardcore bands in the world right now. They deliver short, sharp, visceral bursts of thrashy hardcore fury a la Negative Approach, Infest with elements of Florpunch riffage and shit-talking thrown in for good measure. However, I can't say I fully agree with what vocalist Corey (ex-Carry On guitarist, for all the nerds) said when I interviewed him when they played Wincheap Scout Hut, Canterbury. I'll let you figure out why for yourself:

RN: Firstly, how's the tour going??
Corey: Tour's been awesome. It's been about 3 weeks now I guess, and we tried to hit as many of the good spots in Europe as we possibly could in 3 weeks and I have zero complaints - as far as shows go. The French kids were really shit - in terms of the show, it's great, like the hardcore kids were amazing, the show was amazing, but you try go down sit down have a meal and they treat you like shit. It's awful cos it's such a beautiful country and it's ruined by people's attitudes. It was cool to see all the sites, the show was unreal in Paris. Top two shows definitely go to Ninjafest and Break Down the Walls [German hardcore fest]. [At] Ninjafest, we played like shit but we went nuts -

RN: Naaah, you were good man...

C: Ahhhh!! We watched the video...*laughter*

RN: I didn't know Alone in a Crowd - When Tigers Fight had that little break in the middle...

C: I didn't know that either!! It's weird cos we've been playing it, I dunno, 2 years and for some reason the band members thought, "Hey, let's take a fucking coffee break!! Is it teatime??" *laughter* No it's not, it's the fuckin rest of the song.

RN: Is this your first time in Europe then??

C: Yeah...this is all of our first time in Europe anyways - vacation, tour or anything, so for our first tour in Europe, for Ninjafest to be the first show of the tour...fuck, you couldn't ask for anything more. To just set off a tour having that as your first show...every show could have been bullshit after that and we still would have been happy. It was really good, really good.

RN: The band's had a few lineup changes over time hasn't it??

C: *looks blank*

RN: You've had members of Outbreak coming on for this tour...

C: Oh!! Yeah, what happened was after our last tour our drummer said he couldn't tour anymore so we kinda had to work around that, so we had a dude who was playing for us when we went on the road but he couldn't do it either so Eddie from Morda Pride [?] stepped up and offered to

RN: Yeah I was gonna ask about that...cos obviously you guys aren't ripping on Youth of Today and you aren't on Lockin' Out

Records...you kinda stand apart from much of hardcore. I've heard you compared to like Florpunch, cos you're like shaking it up a little bit and calling people out and stuff. Would you say you stand alone in hardcore in many ways??

C: I wouldn't say we stand alone. I'd definitely say we do our best to not fit in with the new bandwagon, you know what I mean? The bands that I love - the bands that I might not listen to every day - but the bands that stood out over my hardcore career are bands like Negative Approach, Straight Ahead, Infest, Florpunch. Once the whole '96, '97 wave came through, in California, we didn't have shit. Kids were still stoked when Snapcase came through!! I was ordering records from Ten Yard Fight, Florpunch...I got the Mainstrike 7" in '95 when it first came out, I got a little bit of a taste of what Europe had and so...everything in my life has taken a little piece. Like Carry On, I can't help it if I still have a little taste of Carry On in me, I played in the band for 4 fuckin years!!

Short interlude as our mate comes over to sort us out a place to crash As far as like our style and influences, I don't wanna say we have an influence or a style, it just comes down to what comes out. A lot of times, I sit at home, I'll write the majority of the music, go to practise and we'll just work it out, like, "I like this part, that part, blah blah blah". So everyone puts in their input, it's not like one band Nazi tells everybody "do this, do this, do that!!" I do write the majority of the music but on the same term [sic]. I want everyone's input, I want everyone in the band to be satisfied with what we're playing. Lyrically, they all just kinda deal with what I write 'cos, y'know, they've all kinda had little bit of tastes [? - tape goes dodgy at this point] as far as it goes *lyrically* but everyone, at least whether it's a message or whatever I'm trying to say in a song - they all agree with it to a certain extent. It's never a problem.

RN: Would you say your lyrics relate to personal events in your life or would you say it's general sorta principles by which you live??

C: I would go with a little of both. Maybe 50/50. The demo was a little bit more tongue in cheek - I wrote the lyrics a little ridiculous[ly] to kinda like make you hear what I have to say, but on the same term you can kinda giggle with it a little bit. And then with "Casualty of the Core", I wrote it a little bit more serious. Like I wrote a song about friends who've passed, I wrote a song about trendy shit, like kids who think fuckin committing suicide is cool ["What Do I Say"]...like someone who's got a t-shirt with an angel slitting their wrists on it. I mean, no shot at American Nightmare, they're really good friends of mine, and I know that some people have serious issues



in their lives, but I think that's more of a personal thing. I don't think that someone who has serious mental issues should really make that public 'cos it puts you in a position... I dunno if to be taken advantage of or not but... I think that's something you should seek help for. I've had friends who've suffered from suicides - I've never suffered one personally, like a family member or best friend - but I've friends who have suffered from it and it's the most the selfish thing a human can do. Yeah, cool, life is hard, no shit! Sometimes I can't pay my bills, sometimes I can't put food on the table, [sometimes] I gotta starve a couple of days. Life isn't easy, my family was poor as shit but y'know what?? That makes us better people 'cos we appreciate things a little bit different. There are people that have serious illnesses and that's gonna be something different but people who think suicide's cool, I wish they'd go jump off a fucking cliff because they're gonna pop a couple pills, make some people cry, like *pathetic voice* "I didn't really wanna... I need attention". If you need attention, ask for it!! Go to someone who can provide you with what you need. Killing yourself and making your family be bummed out for the rest of their lives 'cos you couldn't buy a Gucci purse or some stupid shit... I dunno. And with the rest of the songs: "Mistakes" is about people who take advantage of your loyalty. I mean, how many times has a friend of yours fucked up and you give them the benefit of the doubt, [you] give them another chance. And another chance. And another chance. And you gotta get to that breaking point where it's like, "Fuck - I've no more chances for you", you know what I mean? I'm not a cat with nine lives [?]. There's a few songs that have a lot more of a serious feel to 'em, as well as a few songs like "Your Jam", all that says is "fuck you", you know what I mean, like goofy shit. So I think it's got a little of both. And then with some of

the newer shit, same thing, try to do more of real messages but try not to be as serious in delivering it, trying to keep the same feel, y'know??

RN: Keeping it fun??
C: Exactly.

RN: To slightly change the subject, obviously you guys are from LA. Over here, LA's sorta seen as this huge divide between Hollywood and Beverley Hills and then there's South Central and the ghettos...

C: Those aren't scenes, those are just cities. I live in the city of Los Angeles, the neighbourhood I live in is called Woodland Hills [?]. It's pretty much like the most north and west point of Los Angeles. [Our] drummer Eddie, he lives in Ringwood, which is 2 blocks from Compton, South Central LA. He lives in the city of Los Angeles, he lives over an hour south from me. You've got Donny Brook, who lives in East LA - they're well over an hour from me and Wittier [?] is still considered East LA. You have this huge scene. But the thing with LA is you have amazing bands but you have zero venues to play in. Hollywood is completely shot, 'cos every time we go to Hollywood to do a show, something bad happens, 'cos they're a bunch of rock star assholes who think that, "you gotta do this and you gotta do that, you gotta treat kids like this". Somewhat of a local band for you guys, Born From Pain, came over to the States, we did the tour with them and Terror and all that. We played at the Whiskey [a Go-Go], which is a very famous venue. The bouncers wanted to try and beat up on little kids and what happened?? We beat the fuck out of every bouncer, fucking trashed the club, we had thousands and thousands of dollars in damages all because some 7ft tall, 300lb fucking meathead wanted to pick on some little kid. You look at a show and you don't know how many kids are gonna stick up for whoever that they don't know.

Alotta kids, they aren't gonna stick their neck out for someone they don't know. But, when it comes down to it, when something serious happens, hardcore kids are gonna back up hardcore kids and that's what happened that night. The bouncers tried to lock us in the club while it was a somewhat one-on-one fight outside - I don't even exactly know what was going on outside until we broke down the doors. We broke down the doors, every bouncer got beat up, cops came, helicopters came, we had stun guns to our face... and now we're all permanently banned from that club. Which is fine with me, I don't wanna go there again in my life anyways. But we're forced to play suburbs and outskirt areas, and it's fine 'cos you know what? You see the same kids at every single show, whether it's an hour and a half drive, 2 hour drive or it's a 10 minute drive. So as far as the LA scene goes, it's very spread out. It's like if you took the lower half of England. You have a 2 hour drive from London to Canterbury basically, depending on traffic. That's kinda like the LA scene, you got one end and one end. And I see kids in here from Leeds tonight, that's like a 4 hour drive from here or something?

RN: More than that... 5 or 6 I'd say.
C: 6 hours?? Kids drove that for the show today. That's what you see in the States a lot. You're used to driving 2, 3 hours to a show... [tape goes dodgy again at this point]... and then you go on tour on the East Coast, kids drive maybe a half hour 'cos on the East Coast, noone really drives a whole lot, so they're kinda restricted to public transportation. So it's kinda crazy when you play Stockholm, Sweden and guys took a 12 hour boat ride to come see us. We play[ed] somewhere else in Sweden and someone drove 6 hours up from Denmark to see us. You guys drove like 6 hours to get here tonight [it was actually 3.5 hours on the train plus another 1.5 hours finding the venue but nevermind]. To me

that's amazing. You could be the only 2 guys at the show and I'd be satisfied to play to you guys simply because you didn't just walk down the street to come here. That shows a little bit more of what's in someone's heart, as far as what they give a shit about. I think that's cool.

RN: Obviously you guys have been in Europe over the whole US election, but did any of you getting round to voting by post or whatever??

C: Not one of us voted. None of us voted for a couple of reasons. Number one, in my eyes - I'll be honest, I'm a little bit ignorant on the subject of politics - but the main reason is, neither of those guys should really be in office. I don't agree with shit from either side and my parents always say, "you gotta vote for the lesser of two evils". You know what? There is really no lesser of the two evils and then someone says, "well then you should vote for an independent party".

Well, our electoral system works on electoral college. Your individual vote doesn't really count for anything because it's only separating [?] a district or whatever it's called and then whoever wins the majority of that district, [it] goes to that candidate. So, whoever voted for Kerry in a Bush district, that person's vote doesn't actually count for anything. When they go ahead and break it down, and make sure that every person's vote counts, then it will actually be worth me voting [?]. Because I already know that my state is guaranteed to go to the Democrats. It's guaranteed. It's always will, for who knows how long, until some other kid has some insane change and does something different to normal... [tape goes inaudible again]... so Republican, Democrat, Green Party, independent, whatever - it really doesn't matter who I vote for 'cos I already know how my state's gonna end up. If you go to Texas, you know your state's gonna go to the Republicans. You're kinda

stuck with whatever your neighbourhood votes for. So until they change the popular vote, I don't think it fucking matters how I vote. You got the same people who will always vote, and your [?] is always gonna go to the same fuckin party, so what the fuck does it matter??

RN: Do you think that maybe the two candidates were actually more or less the same??

C: I think they are similar in certain ways. The thing is that they were both supposed war heroes - whatever, I don't give a fuck man. Let's just stick to hardcore. I don't wanna fuckin speak about politics [?]. Stick to hardcore.

RN: *Slightly stunned*...OK... how did you guys work out doing the split with Last Nerve??

C: It's kinda funny... basically, my best friends are the guys in Terror. So whenever they come home from tour, it's like, "Oh man, we met these guys in this band, you gotta check out this band, you gotta check out that band". That's why No Turning Back's on tour with us now. They came back [from Europe last year] like, "Oh my god, you gotta check out this band No Turning Back" so when we decided to tour I was like, "dude, get me No Turning Back on this tour". So basically, the same kinda happened. Terror went to Australia, told me about Last Nerve [and how] Last Nerve are big IA/Carry On fans, so I started emailing them, started talking to them and I was like, "Fuck, we should just do a split. Expose you guys to the States, expose us to Australia" and then Graham [?] at Resist Records was really into the idea and so he wanted to put out the record and now it's almost like I'm best friends with some of those guys cos I talk to them on the internet like daily... [tape goes inaudible but Corey says here and go and buy IA's discography "This is For You..." on NJW Records, or if vinyl's your thing, go and track down their "Casualty of the Core" 7" or their splits with Allegiance and Last Nerve.]

RN: Until your discography came out, you guys had obviously just done 3 7"s. Was that a conscious choice to stick to vinyl??

C: No... cos we put out the first 7", "Casualty of the Core", on Malfunction. At that time, it was supposed to be released as a CD as well with extra tracks from the demo but due to financial problems, it didn't happen. So we had already agreed to do a split with Allegiance so then that came out and then it was like, now let's do a basic discography of the demo, the 7", the split and then the Last Nerve split came out afterwards. It was [that] we were agreeing to do things faster than we should have or whatever but it worked out things for itself [?]. It wasn't really any kinda stick to vinyl or anything like that cos... [tape goes inaudible for a few seconds and the next thing you can hear is Gareth NCF asking us to come inside cos the scout hut owner is coming and noone's supposed to be outside. Crazy.]

ENDNOTES: Interview: Alan + TQ. Transcribed by Alan. Photos: Edd (they may well not be of IA - just don't tell anyone!) This interview was very difficult to do, since it was freezing cold and I was relying on someone's house's security light to read my questions. Not only that but about 20 hardcore kids were chatting very loudly nearby and halfway through No Turning Back started their set and then the Scout Hut's alarm went off, hence why the Scout Hut owner was coming. The consequence of this show, incidentally, is that now hardcore shows are banned from every single Scout Hut and community hall (i.e. every possible venue) in Canterbury. Sucks to be a CT kid. Ignore much of what Corey says here and go and buy IA's discography "This is For You..." on NJW Records, or if vinyl's your thing, go and track down their "Casualty of the Core" 7" or their splits with Allegiance and Last Nerve.



**"IT IS NOT ONLY BY SHOOTING BULLETS IN THE BATTLEFIELDS
THAT TYRANNY IS OVERTHROWN,
BUT ALSO BY HURLING IDEAS OF REDEMPTION
WORDS OF FREEDOM AND TERRIBLE ANATHEMAS AGAINST
THE HANGMEN THAT PEOPLE BRING DOWN
DICTATORS AND EMPIRES..."**

- EMILIANO ZAPATA, MEXICAN REVOLUTIONARY, 1914

ZAPATISTA RESISTANCE TO GLOBALISATION IN OAXACA, MEXICO

This is a piece written by a solidarity activist who visited Mexico at the end of 2004. We don't have an introduction for the piece, so you'll have to just dive straight in!

WHO ARE THE CIPO-RFM?

CIPO-RFM stands for Consejo Indígena Popular de Oaxaca 'Ricardo Flores Magon', or, in English, the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Oaxaca. They are a non hierarchical pressure group representing the interests of the indigenous peoples of Oaxaca Mexico. We were first introduced to the organisation and its work by an activist named Simon, who we meet near their permanent protest camp in Oaxaca town centre. Ricardo Flores Magon was a Mexican Anarchist and revolutionary who was born in Oaxaca and who died in an American prison at the beginning of the last century. "We never saw ourselves as Anarchists or even political," says Simon, "but when we read about Ricardo, about his life and work and more importantly his writing, we felt it important to put his name to our organisation."

The organisation was set up to represent and coordinate the struggle of the various indigenous groups in Oaxaca. CIPO-RFM is not attached to any political, governmental or church grouping. Its policies are decided by elected representatives at democratically organised assemblies. The group does not have any leaders or paid staff. It is committed to direct action by totally peaceful means. Actions take many different forms, from marches and demonstrations to the invasion and occupation of corporate offices and government buildings. Donkeys and pigs are sometimes 'accidentally' herded into the headquarters of multinationals.

Oaxaca is Mexico's poorest state. It is also the state with the greatest diversity of indigenous communities, with over 20 different languages being spoken. The communities have been robbed of their land and resources by wealthy landowners and foreign (particularly American) corporations. Access to healthcare, even emergency surgery, is another problem facing the region's poor. Oaxaca's inordinately meagre share of government national spending – and, more importantly, the unfair manner in which it is distributed internally – also impact severely upon education, transport, communications, sanitation, electricity, in short, most essential amenities.

Those that have resisted have found themselves under attack in many different ways. The corruption of the local government and its officials are well documented. Less well known is its propensity for violence. Activists have been beaten and imprisoned by police on trumped-up charges. Some have been kidnapped and tortured by rightwing paramilitaries in the pay of the local elite, and others have even been shot and killed by these same hired thugs. Simon himself has been shot twice by these people; one bullet remains lodged in his shoulder.

CIPO-RFM presently has a number of projects running alongside its regular campaign work. There is a pirate radio station that promotes indigenous languages and helps communication between the different communities, some of which are geographically very remote. A website has been established with its own mailing list to promote the ideas of the organisation and to keep the outside world informed of its news and campaigns. There is also a cultural centre and hostel at its Oaxaca headquarters that is presently under construction.

When finished, the building will allow the organisation to accommodate visitors and to educate them about the struggle and culture of Oaxaca's indigenous peoples.

THE PROTEST CAMP IN OAXACA TOWN CENTRE.

On April 20th 2004 activists from CIPO-RFM set up a permanent protest camp outside the governor's palace in Oaxaca town centre. The protest was in response to the murder of their colleagues by paramilitaries the seizure of their lands and unresolved aspects of the agricultural conflict. It is staffed by a rotation of volunteers from local indigenous communities to raise awareness about their organisation and its struggle. One of the main purposes of the camp was to educate the local towns people about their struggle and the ongoing death threats and intimidation they were suffering. The repression experienced by the activists is relentless. However their determination is inspirational and their permanent protest camp remains a physical symbol of their defiance and a useful point of contact for visitors to the area.

The response from local people was generally positive and many expressed interest in the campaign and sympathy for the plight of the indigenous communities. There was a flood of negative coverage and editorials in local newspapers which demanded that the governor of Oaxaca take action against the camp as it was blighting the image of the town. This came from the local rich and privately owned businesses. The Police were hostile but at first did not intervene, the threats being only verbal.

Then at 6am on September 14th, the day before Mexican Independence Day around 200 cops and Special Forces

raided the camp in a military style operation. The 14 activists sleeping inside were badly beaten and arrested. They were taken to a holding centre and then transferred to a maximum security prison. Some of those taken remain there to this day. The camp itself was destroyed and packed onto waiting vehicles along with the activist's possessions.

The response from CIPO-RFM was immediate. Within hours of the raid dozens of activists had gathered at the sight of the camp to rebuild it. Scuffles broke out with waiting riot Police which led to the very surreal sight of The Oaxaca governor making his annual Mexican Independence Day speech while 50 yards away his riot police beat and abused indigenous Mexicans. The activists stood their ground and after a number of high profile protests from all around the world the camp remains a permanent feature of Oaxaca town centre.

The protest camp raid: Gil's story.

'My name is Gildardo Perez Gomez and I am 18 years old. I started working with C.I.P.O. when my sister told me about it; I had already read some books about Magon and liked his thoughts and way of doing things. Six months ago I began to attend the protest camp that C.I.P.O. had in town and from there I got more involved with the organization. It wasn't only because I liked the principles and work of Magon I am also fighting for my people.

Where I come from we are very marginalized, we are forgotten. It not just our people it is many other communities that are suffering because of government policies, they call us 'indigenous' but we want to be recognized for what we are, the rightful owners of this land not foreigners or strangers.'

On the 14th of September at around 6'15

am we were at the camp and about 150 police and Special Forces arrived along with a supposed human rights representative who did not show any credentials, they started to collect our blankets, cooking stuff and literature. They took everything without an explanation; we were asleep apart from those doing the guard. When we awoke they said they were going to proceed with the eviction. They didn't have any eviction orders or any legal documents; they loaded everything on a truck while we shouted anti-police slogans, that was all we could do.

The media reported that they had evicted about 100 people; the truth is that we were only 14. Once they had taken away our things they started to beat us, they didn't have an arrest order but after a phone call to the commander we were all arrested. They separated us into groups and carried on beating us, I was hit in the stomach and the ribs, some colleagues were beaten on the ears, two of them still have hearing problems. We were taken to the police station and on the way there they kept hitting us and telling us we were all going to die, on arrival one of the women was dragged by the hair into the station. We were denied phone calls, we couldn't talk between us, and we were denied all legal rights.

About 50 police in plain clothes came to where we were and showed us an assortment of weapons to threaten us. Then they took us to separate cells and told us that we were being accused of assaulting 15 police officers, stealing electricity and causing damage to a national heritage site. They took our statements at around 12 am and kept trying to confuse us with their questions. Later in the cells they brought us some

papers to sign and told us we were being moved. At the time I was 17 years old, they put me in a maximum security prison. According to federal laws I am a minor but here in Oaxaca you are an adult at 16. On arrival in prison we were taken to see a nurse she checked our pulse, temperature and blood pressure. Then came a doctor who signed a certificate to say we were in good health.

One of our colleagues had a fractured bone and has now developed complications. We were taken to a hall with all the new arrivals, drug addicts, rapists, murderers, burglars. Hearing them talk I wondered what I had done to be there. We were just demanding our rights. I was glad that there were a few of us. I was there for 5 days; I could not sleep at night afraid of what they will do to me. We kept giving them food and cigarettes to keep them happy. There was a lot of drug smuggling going on around us. Personally this experience has not been a deterrent to me to keep on the struggle. I live now between the protest camp and the C.I.P.O. building. In the mornings I take classes, I am preparing to go to university.'

OVENTIC: A ZAPATISTA 'CARACOL'

There are five rebellious autonomous zones in the state of Chiapas, where hundreds of communities are building a different world. The Caracol (spaces built by the Zapatistas to organise their autonomy) are organised by the Zapatista 'Junta' a form of local government made up of elected representatives from Zapatista communities.

The Zapatista Caracol of Oventic is high in the mountains about 15 miles out of the Chiapas capital of St. Christobel. It is a centre for Zapatista organisation and a point of contact with the outside world. It



was the second caracol built by the Zapatistas, it is in the High zones of the region, the place of Tzotzil Zapatistas and an area of extreme marginalization and poverty; This is the biggest of the five caracoles. It is formed by a long Central Street with new buildings being constantly built at the sides. Walking down the street, we see cooperatives, offices, communal bedrooms, an auditorium; the street finishes in an open circular ground where a basketball ground and the first Zapatista secondary school are found.

THE ZAPATISTA HOSPITAL.

One of the greatest achievements at the

Zapatista Caracol of Oventic is the hospital which provides healthcare and medication for thousands of people in nine local communities. We spoke to the hospital administrator; a self educated man elected to take charge of health provision in his community some 12 years ago. The fact that this facility has no government funding is almost unbelievable. The hospital has a dispensary providing drugs to people who would otherwise not be able to afford it. It has a theatre capable of carrying out basic operations. It has a working laboratory where all kinds of diseases and conditions can be diagnosed saving precious time and lives. It also has wards where patients can be kept and monitored overnight. Although heavily dependent on outside donations for drugs and equipment the hospital is largely the result of years of hard collective work by the administrator and his team.

"The idea to build this clinic was born in the years 1987-1988, the reason being that in this region there are not clinics or hospitals providing medical care for the thousands of people that inhabit the area, mainly indigenous people that have never known of proper medical care, children, adults and elders die of curable diseases.

We wanted to build a clinic where patients and their relatives are treated with respect, unlike government hospitals where the indigenous are often discriminated and treated with contempt. We wanted a clinic where the people can plan their health care; the aim is to prevent the diseases that affect their communities. We wanted a clinic where we can prepare and qualify health workers that will help not only this clinic but also the people in their communities, preventing many deaths. The clinic has been working now for about 12 years, receiving 20-25 patients a day and it has about 25 people working fulltime. Most common illnesses being treated are respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases, parasites, skin complaints, rheumatism, arthritis, and tuberculosis. There is now a laboratory where we can diagnose this type of infection and it's helping prevent the problem of epidemics suffered other times in some communities. It was possible to build this clinic due to a collective conscience, the organisation of the

people, the support from friends in foreign countries and the voluntary labour of thousands of people from communities supporting the EZLN.

Nowadays due to the shortage of voluntary doctors, health workers and economic resources that could buy drugs and medical equipment, the service we provide is humble, still we attend everyone without making distinctions and we do everything in our hands to save people's lives, when there's nothing we can do for them here, we try to move them to other services, either to sympathetic doctors or to government hospitals in extreme cases."

For more information go to www.radioinsurgente.org or <http://chiapas.mediosindependientes.org>

THE ZAPATISTA SCHOOL.

Oventic was the sight of the first of many Zapatista education projects. Indigenous Mexicans have been largely excluded from good quality education. Many state run schools do not recognise indigenous languages as part of their curriculum.

"In these classrooms we teach children of all ages and prepare them for our secondary school. They are taught in Spanish and their mother tongue; in this area it is Tzotzil. We use objects, tools, foods animals and natural elements to teach them pronunciation, spelling and writing. We feel it helps them to memorise what they are learning and at the same time the direct relation between these elements and their lives. Older children are also taught about communitarian life, democracy and justice the principles of the EZLN; we explore with them the benefits of working for the good of the community instead of focusing on an individualistic triumph." (Teacher)

At the secondary School students learn grammar and communication, maths, social sciences natural sciences humanism and production. Humanism is about the Zapatista philosophy. In these classes pupils and teachers reflect about the struggle, our main objective is for the youngsters to end their studies with a different vision of life so they don't follow an individualistic life but that they live and work for the benefit of the people and the communities. This allows the youth to understand more about our struggle and who is dominating and exploiting us. After three years our experience is very positive we can see that they have a better understanding of the reality we are living in. It is creating a different conscience and mentality. They are not here to be convinced about the need for our struggle. What happens is that here they get more elements and tools that help them to know about their rights and ways to defend themselves. There is no doubt that education motivates us to fight and strengthens the autonomy of our people.

When pupils finish their secondary

education they are asked as part of their graduation to decide how they can help their people. Options available to them include agriculture, ecology, primary education, pharmacology, and administration to name but a few. Two generations with these characteristics have graduated so far. From the creation of the good government Juntas a single educational system was created for the whole area. There are now over 100 teachers providing educational services in as many communities.

CIPO-RFM LATEST

Things have recently got much worse for CIPO-RFM. There is a new media campaign slander against the organisation its aims and objectives. An attempt was made to arrest an organizer of CIPO-RFM during a workshop in front of Oaxaca cathedral. The attempted arrest was only thwarted by the immediate intervention of those present who were supporting the event. Three foreign observers were detained by the INM (Special Forces).

After these events the assemblies met and following a night of discussions which went on until the early hours decided to invite the governor of Oaxaca to a public dialogue. The meeting was to

take place on Monday 27th of December at 5.00pm at the offices of a human rights commission responsible for monitoring Oaxaca. As arranged a delegation from CIPO-RFM arrived for the meeting. Despite the short notice delegates from six indigenous communities were present to prove their willingness for a dialogue. No governmental representatives showed up and the staff at the building claimed that they only knew about the meeting from the media. CIPO-RFM delegates were refused access to the building. The delegation were only allowed in after 45 minutes when they insisted (as is their right) on making a formal complaint about the governor Ulises Ruiz for not responding to their petition. It was clear that the authorities were not interested in dialogue.

The following morning the Secretary General for the Oaxaca government announced in a newspaper interview his intention to evict CIPO-RFM from their headquarters in the Oaxaca suburbs where they have been since 2000. There is little doubt that the government intend to enforce this threat with violence. There has been an escalation of attacks against CIPO-RFM and its activists. The Oaxaca government will only be able to get away with this for as long as they think that no one else cares. It is vital that the Mexican government (who have always been image conscious) know that people are monitoring their behaviour. As far as letting the governor of Oaxaca and his superiors know that we are watching, well use your imagination.



OUR STRUGGLE IS YOUR STRUGGLE.

INTERVIEW WITH THE ZAPATISTAS

The interview below was with seven Zapatista men and women in one of the meeting spaces in the Zapatista Caracol of Oventic concentrating on the use of media.

Q.- How early in the struggle did you realise the importance of a media project?

A.- We decided at an early stage to have a project of this kind. It was one of the points raised at the "San Andres Talks" between the EZLN and the federal government a few years ago. We raised the point that the indigenous people (the Zapatista people) also had the right to be represented in the media, because we the indigenous had been aware for a long time that we were being excluded, we never had the right to access their media. There we expressed our need and right to have access to the media. We have never had the right to access the mainstream media or to have our own. We wanted the people in power to know it is our right to have them and were determined to build our own. Communication is important to everyone not only to the rich and powerful.

Q.- Do you feel your media projects play a role in the organisation and communication between the communities?

A.- Yes, we think that it has helped, people from other countries come and ask about our struggle, then they comeback with magazines, papers, books, we send all these to the communities, and they can see that other peoples share their views and support their fight.

For us radio is an important and interesting medium, it's been very useful in advising the communities and also to communicate between them. It helps not only Zapatista communities but also other communities. People tend to listen to radio programs in there length, and thus they learn about our ideology and struggle, it's

helping many people understand the causes of our struggle. Because we are indigenous we are mainly illiterate, the vast majority can't read the newspapers, but they have helped the ones that can read to learn and to know about the general situation within our region, our people and the rest of the nation.

Q.- How important is the Zapatista media for communicating and raising the profile of the struggle with the outside world?

A.- The radio has also play an important role on that, we receive letters from people from many other countries telling us that they are listening to Radio Insurgente, it gives us a voice. We as Zapatistas always wanted to spread our voice and before Radio Insurgente we didn't have the means. We found that broadcasting in FM didn't reach many people, sometimes broadcasting in AM reaches further but it was broadcasting on the internet that has helped us reach many more, nationally and internationally. We want everybody to know what is happening here in Chiapas and about the EZLN, our media projects have helped us to reach every continent, it has represented a big advance for us.

Q.- Do you feel that your struggle has spread to new communities in the past few years?

A.- For what we see right now our organisation is advancing all the time, there are more communities that listen and are interested in what we do, in the struggle of the EZLN; we can see the EZLN is winning the interest of many more people; Mexicans know about us since the armed uprising in 1994 and many people in non Zapatista communities have taken an interest on us. For us this is an advance in our organisation, we want to organise more peasants, although there are many that still don't listen, but it is a slow process.

In the last ten years of our armed uprising we have extend considerably in different

communities, in different municipalities and states of the nation. We see we have grown. In 1994 we were a few communities, now we are formed by hundreds of communities, thousands of people. Many people have understood the causes of our struggle, what are the demands and goals of the EZLN.

Q.- What kind of repression are the Zapatistas presently experiencing from the Mexican government and its agents?

A.- Since the massacre in Acteal in 1997, the local and federal government have move lots of soldiers and PGR forces permanently in many municipalities. Close to this 'Caracol' we are surrounded by federal soldiers from the army base in San Andres de (missed the name), in the autonomous municipality of Poloh there are about 15 army bases and PGR forces doing daily surveillance, that's what we see from the government.

The government has always tried to hinder our work and every project we have, that's why they have increased the number of soldiers and army bases around us, also in the communities there are paramilitary groups that are constantly seeking confrontation between people, between brothers and colleagues, they are constantly looking at making trouble and confrontation between peasants, that's the tactic of the paramilitaries helped by the government.

We also experience aerial surveillance, the planes fly low over the communities to see what we are doing, it is a way to intimidate and provoke us, but all this soldiers, paramilitaries and provocations are not going to stop us, our work or our projects, we'll keep going ahead.

For more info about the Zapatistas and their media projects go to www.radioinsurgente.org



One thing that can be said for Leftover Crack is that they don't produce ambivalent reactions in people. You either love 'em or hate 'em. I did an interview with Ezra (guitar) about eighteen-months ago when I thought he was going to kill me he was in such a foul mood, so it was nice to have him at a slightly better time. Likewise it was cool getting Stza's (vocals) opinion on the world.

RN: So how's it going right now? You just changed your label, released the new record...

S: Yeah things are going really good I think. We have a good momentum. We have a lot more people at our shows and we're in a much happier place than where we were three years.

E: Yeah, absolutely.

RN: So are you happier with labels now you're not on Hellcat?

S: Oh definitely. Being on Household Name here, and Alternative Tentacles everywhere else its... It's two labels that we actually feel a kinship with the people who are running it.

E: For once.

S: We actually feel like they're our friends, and who actually support what we're trying to say.

E: I think Alternative Tentacles is probably one of the only record labels in America, or the world probably, who supports us 100% and let's us say what we want to say.

S: Well in terms of big labels. There are plenty of kids who'd be happy to let us put out our stuff.

E: Its probably the biggest label that we're able to be on right now, which will allow us to put out a cover with the World Trade

Centre on it, with George Bush pouring gasoline on it, and Dick Cheney lighting a match, and calling it 'Fuck World Trade'. No other record label would let us do that.

RN: I assumed in the States that you'd actually have a problem finding a printing press who would actually print it. Did you have that problem?

S: I don't know actually. But I think one of the things is, when it comes down to it, is that Disney runs... They run a lot of stuff, especially in California. What they do is they give every printer a little bit of business, which is a *lot* of business. Its

own most of the printing presses in this country.

E: Right. It's like the fact that most of the daily newspapers in America are owned by this one guy called Black. He's staunchly right-wing, and whatever he says goes. That's why most of the papers - the USA Times etc - are all fucking right-wing papers.

S: People consider the New York Times leftwing, even though it's really just in the middle.

E: You know, historically it's been a democratic, slightly left-wing paper, but it's been swinging the other way for several years now. I don't read those papers anyway. I don't really read any paper because I think they're all just propaganda.

RN: Do you think that everything in the States is being pulled to the right?

S: It has been for about forty years now. I mean it started out as being a very right-wing country. There's this huge misconception that the United States was founded on the notion of democracy for 'the people'. When in fact, the reason there was a revolution against Britain, was because the people in power, the rich people - such as Franklin and Jefferson - these people, who are considered patriots, and who we're taught wanted to liberate slaves and this and that. The truth

clearly, is worse because there's way more censorship as a result of it.



is that it was all a ploy so that they could have a bigger piece of the pie. They saw a huge opportunity for financial gain. But they saw that by putting a spin on certain things, and producing certain propaganda, they could create a popular uprising against the British Empire, and that's what they did. I'm sure that most of the people who died in the revolution were poor people who had nothing to gain in the victory. There were a lot of empty promises made. In the end it was the same rich white men who owned and controlled everything.

E: Yeah. I mean you could go way back in history and you talk about - and it's very similar to television - but the very first printing press, was invented for propaganda. It was invented to get people into power. That's what it was invented for. It started off with pamphlets, and then it became newspapers, and it was all about personal attacks, propaganda, and getting people into power. And it's still that way today. It's never changed.

S: I think it's important to get information out there, and I don't think that having printed material is some kind of evil thing. I definitely think that there are many benefits from disseminating true information, but it's so easy for people to lie. And it's so easy for the people with the money to print the most fliers, so more people believe it. That's how the Presidential elections are run in the States. It's how the world works. Who has the most money to create the most propaganda? Whoever does wins.

E: Yeah, I mean for example. Our first President - George Washington - wasn't elected, he was nominated, and it wasn't until the second election came around that people actually voted. For the first six or

seven Presidents it was considered very bad form, very un-gentlemanly like, to campaign for yourself. What the first six or seven presidents did, was they would retreat to their country houses, or the Whitehouse or whatever, and they would just sit there and they would say, 'Look I'm not going to campaign for myself, if you want my services then vote for me, but I'm not going to go out there and make a bunch of speeches'. It wasn't until a little later on, in the mid-nineteenth century, that people actually started to campaign for themselves. That's why printing presses came around because people who were supporting these candidates were putting out the information, they were making the pamphlets.

RN: In the States though you still have election by appointment with the Electoral Colleges.

S: Yup. You also have the problem that it's really only a race between two people. And it all comes down to who's rich, and who has enough money to campaign for the position.

E: Yeah the bottom line is that to run for the Presidency you have to be born in the country, and you have to be rich.

S: You don't have to be born in the country to be elected.

RN: Yeah you do. Schwarzenegger (sp?) can't be president.

S: Oh, I was totally going to vote for that motherfucker.

E: But the whole fucking system is ridiculous because it runs off the electoral college. So even if you don't win the popular vote you could still win the electoral colleges and become president.

E: Yeah, I mean for example. Our first President - George Washington - wasn't elected, he was nominated, and it wasn't until the second election came around that people actually voted. For the first six or

of the electoral colleges. What does that say? People didn't want him in power, but in your state you don't directly vote for the President, you vote for a person to vote the way that you want to vote.

RN: What was your opinion of Punkvoter and trying to get Kerry elected?

S: I don't think that it's very punk to support a rich, white guy.

E: I wish that we had a system more like Australia where you can vote 'non-confidence'. I think if there was a check in the ballot that let you do that, a lot of people would do that. A lot of people don't vote because they don't have any confidence in the vote, but their voices aren't heard. No-one's taking a poll and saying, 'Oh 10,000,000 people voted no confidence', and it's a fucking shame. Because I feel until someone who represents me and my views comes along, I'm not going to vote.

RN: You know what I mean? Until one of my friends runs for President I'm not going to vote. I don't support Kerry and I certainly don't support Bush.

S: I think in order to be a politician you have to be compromised. You have to compromise on everything that you believe, and you have to tell people what they want to hear, and it becomes just a farce. It just becomes completely false.

RN: So you think it's cool when punks run for local office?

S: Yeah I think that's cool. Actually Jesse, who works at Alternative Tentacles in the States, ran for a local position. I don't know whether he's won though. We haven't heard yet. But that's cool. I would have voted for him.

RN: To change the subject slightly. I just

wanted to ask you guys about squatting the States about whether it's as hard as everyone always makes out?

S: It changes from state to state, and from town to town. It mainly has to do with the authorities awareness with what's happening. Almost always when they become aware that people are living for free somewhere they shut it down and evict people, and they find a reason why it's illegal.

E: Basically if you look at the United States as a whole, basically New York - being one of the oldest states in America - has trickle down laws from European countries where it makes it easier to squat there. There's pseudo-squatter rights. We don't get the full rights that you guys get here. But if you go to San Francisco, or LA you're going to have a hard fucking time.

S: You can squat somewhere, but it will last about a week. And a lot of times you'll be charged with trespass or criminal damage of something like that.

E: We're very lucky in New York because we have those trickle down laws, which are rapidly deteriorating, but which means that New York is the only semi-easy place to squat somewhere.

S: I wouldn't say semi-easy, it's just vaguely legal in New York to squat on empty property.

E: New York is the only city in the country where you'll find squats.

RN: I was hearing from friends that during the RNC convention the police were being more difficult towards squatters. Did you have any problems?

S: Every time there's a major event they try to 'clean up' whatever city it's in. And they do these wholesale arrests of dissidents, be they crusties or punk rockers, or try and get them out of town. They don't want them there making the city look bad when the world's media is focusing on it. But all the same at RNC there were some really massive protests, that went pretty well as far as I could tell.

E: Not only that, but on a more tangible level, when conventions like the Republican National Convention comes to New York, they block off all the squats. They take the whole block and they set up barricades, and they have security to shut off the whole block, and you can't come and go without ID, and what squatter has ID? It's like the eviction of Serenity (sp?) Squat, which is down the block from us. They basically went to every squat on the Lower East Side where we live and there's almost 13 squats there.

S: There's 11 now, but there were more than 13 at the time actually, there was probably 20 or something! But over years they've slowly evicted them, and pushed us back, which is maybe why we're getting less hassle at the moment.

E: But they definitely take notice of us. They definitely take us very seriously. It was only three years ago, that three coked up detectives would show up at our fucking squat, every week with sledge hammers...

S: And just break in...

E: Hold people at gun-point, asking people where the fucking drugs and guns are. They went up and down the building searching. Every fucking Thursday that happened man.



S: They'd just break into our building, which is totally illegal, and we'd be forced to get them back out. It was like 'You guys can't be in here. You need to leave!'

E: But they have free-reign to do pretty much whatever they want, and these guys were big guys. And they kept doing this, until we finally complained to Margarita Lopez, who is our local councillor.

S: She's actually really cool. She us stopped getting harassed.

E: We finally went to her and said, 'Look these detectives are breaking into our building every fucking Thursday, with sledgehammers and holding everyone at gunpoint.' Finally it quit when we complained to the council. That didn't stop them barricading our block though, and sending fucking huge police trucks, and heavy security. They had snipers on every roof surrounding our squat. It's a pseudo war!

RN: I guess that's why you have so many songs about disliking cops!

S: Well yeah. (laughs) There's so many reasons!

E: That's just one of them. My main problem with the police is that cops hail themselves as being blue collar. Okay. And I consider that to be a...

S: A contradiction?

E: Yeah that. But I mean they're class traitors. They're protecting the rich and yet here they are trying to demand that they get blue collar workers' rights.

S: And the other thing is that the cops don't even live in the neighbourhoods that they patrol. They live way out in the suburbs and just come into the city, and just bully people around. They wouldn't do that, if they were patrolling their own neighbourhood because they'd have to answer to all the neighbours. But they can come into the inner city from the suburbs and bully people around.

E: They come in from Long Island, they come around, and they don't understand what's going on in the city, they don't

understand inner city politics...

S: I think one of the interesting things was when, I think it was maybe 15 years ago now, Jello Biafra ran for mayor of San Francisco and one of his platforms was that your local police had to be elected, and that they had to be from your neighbourhood. So it would be the same as your City Council Representative is. I thought that was a cool idea.

E: It was a similar idea to the one that the Black Panthers did. They started their own fucking police force to follow cops around, to make sure that the cops weren't going around beating people up. And that's probably the first time in history where that's ever happened. But there's a million reasons to hate cops. Basically if you want to be a cop then I believe that there's something fundamentally wrong in your brain. If you want to be a politician, if you want to be a cop, a security guard, if you want to be a bouncer, or any other position of power you want to fucking push people around.

S: And the people think that they want to be a cop, because they can help change it from the inside, are just full of bullshit. When you join the cops you're basically joining a gang, and the whole premise of being a police officer is that you have to support anything any other officer does, without asking questions. You ask questions later... Though that'll probably lead to you getting kicked off the force! But in any situation you side with the other officer, no matter how wrong they are, be it racist or violent or whatever they're doing. That's why it's a gang. It's fucking gang warfare.

E: Speaking of gang war-fare, not to make this too long. But when police first came into being in New York there were two different police factions. There was the Metropolitan police and there was the State Police, and they were both gangs, and ended up in a state of warfare with each other. A Metropolitan police officer would arrest someone for robbery, or something, and the State police officer walking past would let the criminal get away by starting on the Metropolitan police officer. In fact they had a full blown gang battle on the steps of City Hall. The Major - who was a supporter of the Metropolitan police - holed himself into City Hall for three days, whilst the Metropolitan police surrounded the City Hall because the State police were trying to arrest him. It all ended because the State Militia, who were marching commemorating a battle they had fought, heard about it and stepped in on the State police's side, and they fucking destroyed the Metropolitan police and arrested the major. They were two gangs.

S: It was a similar thing that happened when the Transit Authority Police were created, where the regular police and them wouldn't co-operate with each other. But anyway we're way off subject, you better ask us another question.

RN: I was going to ask, over here living for free - dumpster diving, shoplifting etc - is really easy, I was just wondering what it's like in New York?

E: Yeah we live in a throwaway society like here.

S: You can only do it in a rich society though. But I'm sorry I think I missed the question.

RN: I think you already answered it, but it was simply whether it's easy to live for free in the States?

E: It's easy as shit.

S: Especially if you're white. It's just so fucking racist, the shopkeepers are racist, the cops are racist, even the black cops are racist. They see black people doing shit, and it's a crime, but if the white person was doing it, it'd just be a slap on the wrist.

E: It's almost as though black police officers are race traitors. They hate where they came from and they seem to have it for other black people. It's this weird twisted sort of thing.

S: Up until the 1970s there weren't any police officers. They started to bring them in to try and keep society under control more. They figured out a plan that if they could get black people to join the police force, they could control the population more.

E: Since the early 90s the police department in New York City has been trying desperately to recruit more ethnic minorities. So if you go to New York you'll see posters fucking everywhere of one white dude, a black woman, and a Hispanic man etc. all dressed in cop uniforms, because they're intensely aware that the police force is full of fucking white people. And so they're desperately trying to recruit and make it more diverse, which is a crock of shit, because at the end of the day a cop is a cop.

RN: To change the subject quite a bit then, how did you end up working with Steve Albini?

S: That happened through our friend Brad Logan, of the band F-Minus. I'm not sure how he managed it but he worked with Steve for *Wake Up Screaming* that he put out on Hellcat, and our bass player is a really big Steve Albini fan, and he asked Brad if there was any way that we could book time with him to work on the record.

E: It ended up being fairly affordable. So we went in. I was kind of sceptical at first because I was thinking, 'Oh it's Steve Albini he's famous, he's just gonna be a dick'. I thought there'd be a lot of pressure, but actually it worked out really well, and once we figured out how he worked, and he figured out how we worked, we hit it off pretty good. If we had more money we would have finished the record with him. I think it suffered because we didn't finish it with him.

E: Yeah, the recordings that we did with him turned out great. It was the mixes that got done by someone else though and that's what fucked up the record.

S: Some of it's been messed up, but quite

a lot of the mixes were done by Steve, and we asked the guy who was mixing it to try and mimic that sound, and those are the songs that came out the best. The best song on there - in terms of pure recording quality - is *Operation M.O.V.E.*, which was totally recorded and mixed by Steve Albini. E: But as far as Steve Albini goes we got along with him really well, he's really down to earth, and he treats you like a complete human being. He is very humble and he doesn't let the fame go to his head. He's almost more anti-establishment than we are.

S: He's certainly more anti-record industry than we are!

E: It turned out really well for us.

RN: I think that's all.

S: Is that all?

RN: Yeah unless you wanna add anything else?

S: Yeah, well I said this in an interview earlier. If people want to make a difference politically in their lives they can be more conscious about where they shop, what products they buy, and where they're coming from, like where their clothes are made and stuff. I think it's a really important message and something that we're trying to get across on this new record. Fuck World Trade. People come up to us and ask, 'What's wrong with World Trade?' Well everything's wrong with world trade. But it starts with the individual. They're the ones that will make the difference, even if it's only a small difference.

RN: Actually I'll ask you about that, cause the interviews I've read with you guys before you seem to have been a lot more pessimistic than that, that you can't change anything, and you've kind of given up.

S: I mean things are pretty hopeless, and the world's going to shit, and I think that with any bit of luck humans will be extinct in the next 1,000 years.

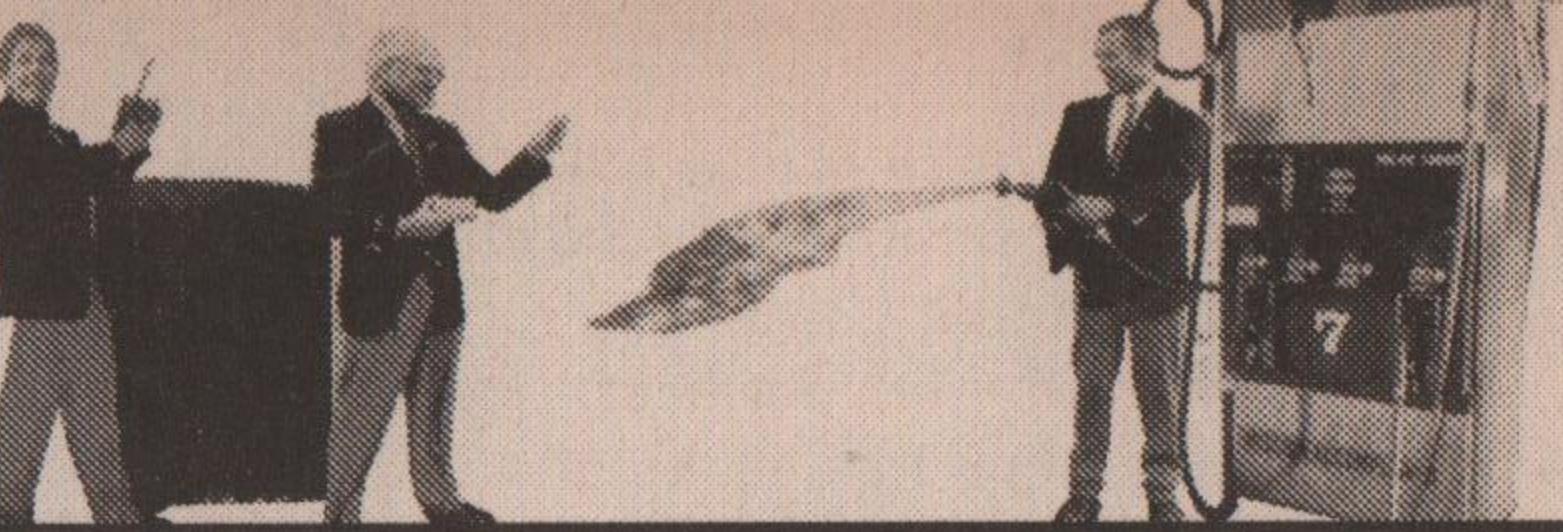
E: (Laughs) Yeah if we're lucky.

S: But for the time being - whilst we're alive - I think we should do whatever little we can do for our fellow humans or fellow animals.

E: Basically what it comes down to is that I feel that the only reason I have to be alive is to try and make other peoples' lives a little bit easier. That's the bottom line man!

S: We're just trying to get a message out with our music, and trying to make music that people enjoy and listen to. We know that most of our fans are young and impressionable, and I know that a lot of our rhetoric and artwork is negative, but if you really read the lyrics there's positivity to it, and we're saying these negative things to try and do our part in making the world a little bit of a better place. And hopefully people might inherit some consciousness from it. Yeah I think that's it. (laughs)

End Notes: Interview: Edd. Artwork: Shaun 5k. Photos: Edd. 'Fuck World Trade' is out on Household Name Records.





CHRIS MURRAY: ONE EVERYTHING

Intro – I was tired, we missed a lot of previous references which came out as really bad questions but it happens – things got better – it always sounds better in print – you can't hear how tired I was!

RN: Well I suppose the first question's going to have to be, how's the tour going?
A: Good, this is the fourth show, it's fairly early but the shows so far have been really good.

RN: Is it just yourself over here?
CM: I'm travelling with RX Bandits for the whole tour but I'm performing solo...

RN: ...Ok, I meant are you just playing on your own, but seeing as you just answered that... are there any plans to get the combo over here soon?

CM: There are no concrete plans at the moment but in the long-term, general plan. Yeah!

RN: You've taken them to Japan already, right?
CM: Yeah, right now the other guys I play with in LA have jobs so they were able to take holiday time with Japan but this tour is four or five weeks so either they either quit jobs or don't go. At this point it's easier for me and for them to keep it like this. I want to take them out when I know that they'll be covered.

RN: Yeah, it'll be great to see them all, anyway one of the burning questions I'm going to tear straight in with is how exactly do you record and album on a walkman?
CM: Just like we're doing this interview... turn it on and play.

RN: Oh, ok, I've been shown some interesting ways of mic'ing up headphones in my time, I thought you did it like that...
CM: Nah I just use the built-in condenser mic on the walkman.

RN: I've never seen a walkman with a record button on it before, I must be missing out... What made you want to stick so rigidly to the such lo-fi methods or recording because, obviously when you started out with the 4-Track Adventures album, having your 4-Track on hand in the Garage was your outlet. Your way of tabbing out the tracks at the time...

CM: It kinda stayed in that same way. When I made the first album I wasn't consciously making an album, I was just doing a number of recordings and at a certain time I thought Ok, I should put out an album and I took some of

those recordings. And I kept recording on 4-track, again because, really, when I write a song it's a good way to make sure I remember exactly how I'm feeling. So a while passed and I had more songs, I got to record another album, and with the walkman album I had a bunch of songs and I didn't have time to 4-Track them all. So over a weekend I just recorded them and I gave those to Mike Park at Asian Man and some studio stuff I've done and he said 'I really like the Walkman stuff' and I said, 'Okay', if you think so!

RN: Ok, so do you think people have picked up on the control, and the honesty of the Walkman record that Mike obviously felt?

CM: It's definitely not pretentious so I know some people connect with that. Some people, with the Walkman album just can't get past the sound quality of it. Other people think, beyond just non-pretentious, that it's really cool to have it so lo-fi because it does sound like an old recording and there's no tricks.

RN: I think it's quite nice to turn other people onto a different way of listening to things as well because people get all caught up in the gloss of the industry and don't realise that a lot of the bands they watch on MTV got signed from a crackly demo tape. Unless you're going to be really cynical and claim they were all just picked up of the street and groomed. I guess the point I'm trying to make, is that if there's something good and something honest in the music people are going to hear it be it from a studio album or a crackly demo tape...

CM: Yeah. For me, I grew up on vinyl so music's supposed to have some kind of crackle in there.

RN: What's it like being a solo artist? We found you sitting in here eating on your own, and there's only one of you to man the merch table later on, you know? Does it get lonely?
CM: I've done both a lot, and probably by now, for about an even number of years. I love being in a band, and right now is really a good time for me because I have a band and I do a lot of things solo, so I do both types. As a solo artist, things are a lot easier in some ways. Organisation is obvious, the overhead, travelling, and mouths to feed.

RN: Yeah, and the whole 'wave' thing has made it more convoluted and more confusing than it really is. It's a question I've stopped asking people who make ska music because I've debated it far too much with people like Dave from Mustard Plug and Marcus from The Slackers, and more often than not ska is ska; there's no need to re-package it every so many years...

CM: I think historically it can be shown there have been a few instances where ska got popular. Today, ok, it will always happen in a 'wave' but I think now there's been a continuous error of ska for forty years up and down yeah, but I think it's not so much here and then gone it's maybe more popular, less popular but it's always there.

RN: Steph's from Chicago... I was trying to relay the story to her about that first gig but I couldn't remember all the facts... it was with The Toasters wasn't it?

CM: I was travelling with Lets Go Bowling... I think Mephiskaphles(s?)... maybe The Toasters, maybe one other band? A good bill.

RN: But they hadn't advertised it at all had they?

CM: No, that whole tour, there were problems, logistic problems at the organisation end of that tour.

RN: If I asked you how many times you've had to explain to people what ska is are you going to do 'the face'?

CM: Ah.

RN: Is that 'the face'?

CM: Nah, I've done it a lot, but these days not so much. When I started touring with King Apparatus across Canada endlessly we had to explain what ska was; and in the last ten years, hardly at all.

RN: I was referring to an interview I've read previously where you said ask anyone who was in a touring ska band in the early nineties how many times they had to explain what ska was and you'll see 'the face'.

CM: Oh, I think it's like [does 'the face'] 'that question again'? Yeah, people today are generally familiar with ska [everyone except for my fucking spell checker! -Chris]. Perhaps what they think of when they think of ska is something that maybe I don't think is ska, but at least they have a sense of it, rather than they've never heard of it.

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RN: [Mention Marcus's wave quote if you don't later] as have been bands and performers like yourself, Dan Potthast and MU330 and The Slackers, what do you think have made you such a bunch of survivors?

CM: Hhmm, I guess it's an individual thing that makes any one person survive. For me I know this is something I really want to do and I really enjoy doing it so I don't think too much about it, you know, I just keep doing it. There's nothing else that calls me like, 'Oh, you should be an accountant' or 'why don't you go back to school'.

RN: Marcus and I spoke for some time on the subject and he eloquently came up with the image of a ska wave hurtling towards you and the choices you have; you can ride it out till it runs out of momentum and risk getting wiped out in the process or you can dive under it.

CM: (laughs) True!

RN: And once you've got an answer that good, you don't need to ask the question again. What's it like promoting things like the Blue Beat Lounge, particularly when there seems to be such a ska backlash at the minute?

CM: You know, I think that backlash has more or less died out.

RN: Yeah, but it hit the UK not too long ago...
CM: Do you feel like it's dying out here?

RN: I feel like we're experiencing the last few ripples on the pond, but they're still there, you know?

CM: Yeah, I think that England maybe has been a few years behind the US in it's taste of ska, and definitely, there was a while in the US where a lot of clubs had lost money putting on shows that maybe six months before would have done really well but it didn't happen and they just said, 'Ok, we're not making a lot of money with ska now turn on emo, indie rock or whatever. The next thing's going to be to make our money!'

RN: That's an interesting point 'cause I had a chat with Brian Diaz last year, now in The Reunion Show and he told me that back in the day all promoters needed to do was put up a sign saying ska show, no names, just generics and they'd get 200 kids through the doors a night. Then again, it didn't take him too long to jump ship. I'm still adamant that The Reunion Show sound like Edna's Goldfish trying to play emo, all they needed to do was switch the Hammond for a Moog and the transformation was complete. You weren't tempted by a shameless change in direction were you?
CM: No, No, I just do what I do and even when ska was really popular what I was doing wasn't

really the type of stuff that was getting mainstream, so I wasn't really choosing to do it for any reason beyond what I wanted to do. To answer your question about promoting the Blue Beat Lounge it's actually been really not that hard. Like anything that starts it takes a while for something to grow but it's reached a level where it almost doesn't matter too much whose playing. There's a group of people that come out all the time and week to week, depending on what the bill is there will definitely be this group of people comes out to see Vic from The Slackers play and then this separate group would come out to see Matt from RX Bandits play or MU330 would draw a certain style of crowd...

RN: You're making me jealous already, and I don't even live in the same country.

CM: Oh it's been great, I've been doing weekly shows for, well, by the end of this year it will be two years. It started at the beginning of 2003.

RN: With a 3 month residency!

CM: Yeah, exactly, so it's really gone off well. The club loves it because the room is packed every week, they make money and they don't have to think.

RN: It must be nice as well to know that it's a dedicated group of people in that room every week as opposed to having a larger group of people following the flavour of the month?

CM: Yeah, there's definitely a group of people who have been into ska for a long time, and that's a community. I think that's something that did go away a little bit when ska did get huge in the US. Before that there was a smaller number of people into it and a smaller number of artists and everybody kinda knew each other, either directly or through reputation and it got to a point where – I've been doing it for ten years, but – I didn't know half of the bands who were out playing ska. There's just stuff that happened really quickly. There were still a lot of people that I knew of course, but now I feel that when I go round and play ska shows I know a lot of people. It's really a community and I feel a part of it.

End Notes: Interview: Chris "Lipgloss" Lever. Photos: Stolen from Chris Murray records. Moon Ska Records just put out a discography of sorts of Chris Murray's solo stuff called 'One Everything'. The rest of his back catalogue can be found on Asian Man Records.



ART: NICOLAS LAMPERT
WWW.MACHINEANIMALCOLLAGES.COM

by: edd baldry

THEY MAY BE HAVING ELECTIONS BUT THE PILAGE OF IRAQ CONTINUES

The elections in Iraq occurred as this article was being written. A number of people have complained that you can't have free and fair elections while being watched over "by the barrel of a gun". That this is little more than an occupiers' election, to elect compliant politicians to continue America's dominance in Iraq. This is possibly true, but considering the US and UK government were initially highly hostile to the idea of elections in Iraq - and only came about from grass roots agitation - I am keeping a slightly open mind to the possibility that some good might come of them. All the same there is a high chance that America's puppet - Ayad Allawi - will become the new Prime Minister of Iraq. If this happens then none of the mistakes made in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, or any of the Central American states attacked in the 1980s 'War on Drugs', will have been learnt by America. This article doesn't concern itself expressly with this issue. It concerns itself with the fact that even in the best case scenario, even if the elected government asks the US/UK troops to leave, Iraq will still be occupied.

Iraq was the Neo-Conservatives dream. Or at least it was going to be. In June 2003, when the Coalition Provisional Authority (CAP), lead by America, introduced the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), the "capitalist dream" as the Economist described it, appeared to be coming to fruition. In one place on Earth the Neo-Cons were going to have their perfect laissez-faire economy. "Liberated" Iraqis, would give way to liberated multinationals, a shrunken state, a flexible workforce, open borders, minute taxes, no tariffs, no ownership restrictions, and no restrictions on capital leaving Iraq. Sure, the Iraqis might suffer in the here and now, but that suffering would pay off once the economic boom - which was bound to come - arrived.

The popular assertion, by most liberals and conservatives, is that the occupation of Iraq failed because there wasn't a 'plan of action'. There were no plans laid down for what to do about bombed hospitals, schools, roads, and all the myriad of little things required to run a state. There was a plan though. The plan was simple, and terrifying. Iraq was sold off to the highest bidder.

This was exactly what Paul Bremer, leader of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CAP) did, with his hundred edicts. What had taken America three decades to try and implement in South America or South-East Asia, Bremer did in the space of three months. "Shock and Awe" of an entirely different nature. He sacked 500,000 state workers, opened up the borders, removing any vestige of tariff or tax from imports and declared Iraq "open for business".

It didn't stop there though. September 2003 was when the cluster bombs were released. There was Order 37, which lowered corporate tax from around 40 percent, to a flat rate of 15 percent. Then Order 39 was implemented, which put 200 Iraqi state companies up for sale, all of which could be owned entirely by foreign companies, and firms could move all of their profits out of Iraq. Order 39 was tantamount to a neo-con's ultimate fantasy. In fact the only thing that Paul Bremer and the CAP retained of Saddam Hussein's economic policies was his law restricting trade unions, and collective bargaining.

Not wishing to keep Monsanto, and their other bio-tech friends, out of the party Order 81 was enacted, which bans the 10,000 year practice of farmers saving seeds from one year to the next. Likewise under Bremer's Order seeds now need to be 'new, distinct, uniform and stable'. The only seeds that can meet this criteria are the ones created by the bio-tech industry. Like the rest of the economy, the USA, whilst claiming to be "restructuring" agriculture, has in fact completely dismantled it. Where once farmers grew food to feed themselves and their family, they will now - if the Coalition - have their way, be growing food for export and then using that money to buy their food¹.

The CAP didn't forget about the need to protect these foreign investors, enacting Order 59, which meant that Coalition soldiers, and the "protection agents" (read: Mercenaries) who protect contractors are exempt from domestic law. This means that someone like Methal Kazem, who is one of the only women to talk about her abuse in Abu Ghraib, has no legal recourse against the soldiers who tortured and physically abused her². Order 59 essentially gives a *carte blanche* to Coalition forces, and mercenaries to do

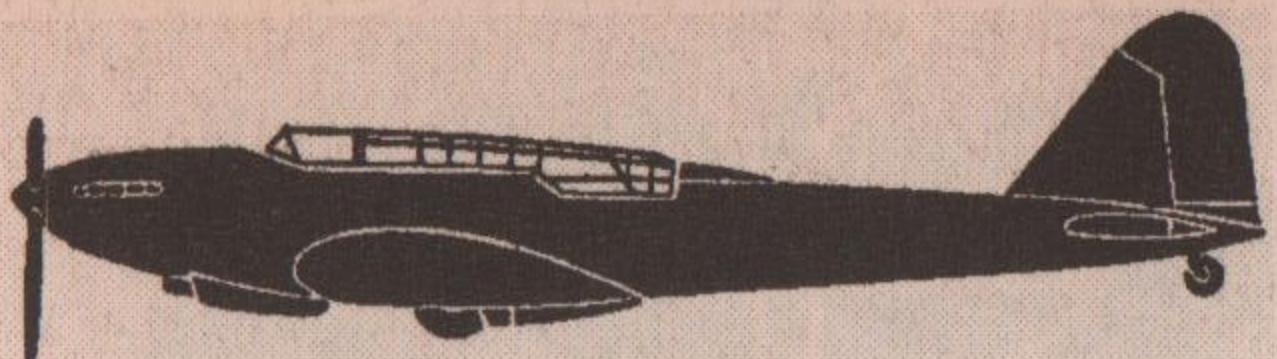
whatever they please. But as Bremer stated in June 2003, all of this was necessary because, 'We have to move forward quickly with this effort. Getting inefficient state enterprises into private hands is essential for Iraq's economic recovery.'

These Orders all do one thing. They put Iraq under the control of foreign capital. If, in June 2004, the American troops had left when Allawi and his Interim Iraqi Government (IIG) had received "sovereignty", the Western states would still have remained in control of Iraq.

The neo-cons dream has gone slightly awry though. Initially the "honey-pot" that Bush talked about during was indeed attracting flies. But soon enough trade lawyers were expressing disquiet about the illegality of these orders, under the 1907 Hague, and the 1949 Geneva conventions, and insurance companies were refusing to insure companies from government re-nationalisation. The neo-cons thought that the Interim Iraqi Government, made up almost entirely of American-Iraqis, was the answer to their prayers, since legally the IIG, regardless of whether they were simply puppets or not, could enact the CAP's Orders. The Interim government had to sign up to the Interim Constitution, into which Bremer added Article 26, which stated that "the laws, regulations, orders and directives issued by the Coalition Provisional Authority... shall remain in force" and could only be changed once an elected government came to power. Despite Ayatollah Ali al Sistani's misgivings the constitution was signed.

This wasn't the real problem that the neo-cons had. After all what do Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Bush care for International Law? The real problem was the insurgency. The 500,000 people that were laid off as police officers, soldiers, doctors etc. did not all simply disappear. They found alternative employment. The violence has been so great, and the series of kidnappings so damaging for insurers, that foreign investors are staying far, far away.

This doesn't mean though that Iraq is free. The first raid of corporate raiders may have been repelled but Bremer's orders,



to date, all still stand. It is possible that the elected government will revoke the orders. Then again the Americans aren't completely defeated. To date only \$3bn of the reconstruction money agreed by Congress has been paid for reconstruction work (and most of that has been spent in the "Green Zone" - where the American Embassy, and IIG headquarters are - or on protection), leaving \$15bn still owed. It is up to Ambassador John Negroponte - made famous for his "work" in Honduras in the 1980s (think Contras and "War on Drugs") - when, and how, he gives out this remaining money. All the same it is still possible for these Orders to be revoked, and we - as inhabitants of one of the Coalition states - should be working out how to make this happen.

Even if these orders are revoked though Iraq will still see the return of the corporations. Whatever shape the government takes after these January 2005 elections one thing is for sure: They will owe \$120bn in debt. Like all poor countries around the world Iraq will discover that men in blue suits are knocking on the door offering "aid" in exchange for a "restructuring" of the economy. These conditions would of course bind any Iraqi government to laissez-faire economic policy and free-market fundamentalism.

On November 21, 2004, the Paris Club, made up of the 19 most industrialised states, met. They - against a significant amount of historical president - agreed that the "odious" debt³ that Saddam Hussein had acquired should be passed onto the next Iraqi government, and as such passed onto the Iraqi people. It was accepted by the Paris Club that Iraq would be incapable of re-paying all of this debt, and therefore a large portion of this would be written off. This - where it was reported - was couched in humanitarian terms, the reality is simply that creditors are seeking to bleed as much capital out of Iraq without actually killing it.

It was agreed that 30 percent of the debt would be written off unconditionally, whilst a second 30 percent reduction will occur as soon "as a standard International Monetary Fund program is approved". A final 20 percent reduction will be granted only "upon completion of the last IMF board review of three years of implementation of standard IMF programs." In other words 30 percent will be reduced if Iraq agrees to "restructuring", and another 20 percent will be reduced if the IMF is satisfied with how far this "restructuring" has gone.

There was initial outrage from the Interim government over the fact that the "odious" debt had not been revoked. This - as demonstrated by "letters of intent" written by three interim ministers at the end of September 2004 - turned out to be little

more than token protest. These letters express the usual IMF lyrics of the need to "[restore] Iraq's debt sustainability", "tax reform", "financial sector reform", "restructuring state-owned enterprises" and "macroeconomic stability". The IIG ministers could have quite easily have just written the words, "Dear IMF, please privatise our country, best regards Ayad". On not one occasion do they discuss the issue of unemployment, poverty, lack of drinking water, and other issues that are actually considered problems by Iraqi people. The IIG took a further step along the word towards foreign capital subordination by applying - in October 2004 - for membership to the World Trade Organisation.

This means that any elected Iraqi government is now tied to the International Monetary Funds "restructuring", and to allowing - much like Bremer's CAP orders did - foreign investors to take control of public infrastructure. In everyday parlance this means that Iraq's economy is fucked. To elaborate slightly more it might be useful to consider what happened - in the late 1990s - to Argentina and other South American states, or the Tiger Economies of South East Asia, both of whom followed to the letter the IMF doctrine, and both of whom saw their economies collapse, as foreign capital took flight.

On top of all of this, the IIG, and the American government have been discussing the need to replace the food rations, which currently keeps some 24 million people in Iraq alive, with the more "convenient" food tokens, or money. Money though is - as in most warzones - almost worthless, and food prices liable to change on a daily basis.

As opponents to the war, we need to go beyond simply calling for the invading troops to be removed from the country. The corporations, and their laws, need to be bought back with them. As Naomi Klein states, "Bring Halliburton Home, Cancel the Contracts, Ditch the Deals, Rip Up the Rules." Its not too late for Iraq to be returned to the Iraqis.

A brief discussion on the idea of "civil war" in Iraq.

A drum has been banged by Tony Blair for the past six months. To paraphrase it's beat it runs along the lines of, "Well I understand you were against the invasion, but you must now surely support our troops as they bring stability into the lives of Iraqis, beat back the 'terrorist insurgents' and help give 'democracy' a chance in Iraq". The accepted wisdom of the West is that to pull out of Iraq now would lead 'them' spiralling into civil war.

This sectarian conflict though has almost been entirely created by the West and in

the minds of the Western media. It is the common tactic of the British Empire - seen perhaps most clearly in the partition of India and Pakistan - of divide and rule to legitimise their continued presence.

A well-versed politico will be able to tell you that the problem is that Shia, Sunni, and Kurd are incapable of living next to each other. The only problem with this is that they've managed quite happily since their religion split after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. As a mechanic in Baghdad explained when asked by Robert Fisk, "Sunni and Shia are like brothers with slightly different opinions. We still live together... It is only the foreigners [Zarqawi and US/UK] who are trying to divide us."

And that seems to be exactly what the Coalition is doing. The siege of Fallujah, and the massacre that occurred there immediately after the American Presidential Elections, meant that Sunni politicians could do little other than boycott the January 30th election. Likewise the armed resistance is regularly described as being the work of terrorists (armed resistance that targets American forces, is clearly different to forces who kidnap and execute aid workers such as Margaret Hussein. America likes to tarnish them with the same brush), and is regularly couched as being the work of Sunni insurgents.

With Sunni (who make up 20percent of the population) boycotting the election it is difficult to see how the result, which will more than likely lead to a Shiite coalition, will not further enflame the situation.

This is perhaps what America and Britain are trying to do. It is certainly what occurred in Vietnam, where the threat of "civil war", and the spread of communism that, that would lead to, was the key reason for remaining in the quagmire there for ten years. The only difference appears to be the word communism has been replaced by the word "terrorism".

Lets be clear about what is happening: The United States and the United Kingdom have indeed destroyed Iraq. But F-16s and soldiers are bad tools for fixing anything, and their continued presence in Iraq does little more than create more resistance and more sectarian violence. If Bush and Blair truly wished to avoid a civil war they'd be well advised to withdraw their troops, and pay reparations to whatever government comes into force in Iraq.

There is an international day of action against the arms trade on 21st March 2005.

dsei.org / indymedia.org.uk / smashedo.org.uk. More info on this subject can be found at nologo.org or iraqijubilee.org.

Dragon Force

*Lift up your swords
we fight for life!*

RN: Ok, boring first question, who are you, what do you do in the band?

H: Herman, from Dragonforce, I play guitar...that's one of things I do in the band...

RN: What the other things you do in the band then?

H: As well as playing, I also record the band's albums along with Callum (I think?!) the producer, so as well performing and writing I do a lot of the recording.

RN: Cool, how did you guys first form?

H: Back in 99', Sam and I - the other guitar player used to play in a band, but it was a different kind of music, with more death vocals and we always wanted to do melodic stuff with clean vocals, and we found an advert from out singer Zippy, and he was looking for a band, so that's how it all really kicked off! And so yeah, just found some other members, and got things going...

RN: OK, I think you guys had to have a name change at some point right?

H: Yeah, we used to be called Dragonheart, and we recorded a demo which kicked us off in the beginning, and it was downloaded about half a million times on the internet, so that lead to all...we were playing shows in the demo days already, but that's how we finally got signed. In fact, some of the songs from the demo are on our first album.

RN: As long as they don't knock any of the equipment over...

H: Oh I don't care anyway! (laughs) We put the guitar down the front, they play

for a really energetic, live show...like encouraging people to bring swords and axes (!!!) to shows...do you feel it's really important for a band to have loads of energy when playing live as well as keeping all the technicality?

H: Well, you know, I don't wanna sound stupid or arrogant here but I go and see bands and at the end of the show people go "wow that was great!" and I'm thinking "phh...well, they played the songs..", but that's the MINIMUM requirement of a live band, to stand there and just play the songs and they don't move an inch...and ya know, I've never understood what's so great about it. If you're playing jazz and just looking at your fingers...depending on your style, but you can always take it to another level, you can take any kinda style. I like lots of brutal bands, and they've got really energetic, and for the type of music we play, it seems to be labelled as "musos", but we don't stand there...we always believe in the stage presence, it's as important as the music and the playing. Tonight, you'll see it, we jump around in the air and stuff (note from mikey - 360 spins actually as well, but hey...) and whilst playing, playing each other's guitar, over the head...all that kinda thing! And usually we ask the barriers to be taken off so fans can get on the stage and stage dive or whatever...

RN: You guys have a bit of a reputation

it as well...tonight the stage is really high, but well...the London show was totally insane on this tour, people bringing plastic swords and axes and went absolutely mental, so the security took that all away... and kept the barriers, which was a bit of a bummer!

RN: That's cool, that you guys are into audience/band interaction, cos I don't know if you know but you've got quite a following in the punk and hardcore community, you've crossed over, simply because I think people couldn't believe what they were hearing and coupled with the really energetic live show...are you proud of that? That you don't just appeal to "metallers" etc?

H: Yeah I mean, like you said, the punk and hardcore stuff...they're out their on stage *does guitar jump motion thingy* bam, bam, bam...jumping, slamming, whatever ya know? That's the great thing about that kinda stuff, and the way we play, we still do the solos and all that...cos we always take the best out of each style, hard stuff to soft stuff and we're a bit...not hyperactive, but...yeah its just way more fun, it's boring when you stand still! And the music is so energetic anyway you can't really stop doing it...there's always accidents and blood being spilled on stage. We've just been told...we have stage riser which we jump off to get higher and we've just been told to move it back a bit in case we fall off, cos it's quite high. And I just said "fuck it, it doesn't matter, just leave it in the front, we won't fall off!", we've



done it so many times...

RN: Er...I've run out of questions...um yeah, who were the first bands you listened to who really inspired you to play music?

H: I don't know. When I first saw someone play the guitar really! My friend had one and I saw him play, and so that kinda kicked it off. As you listen to more musicians you go "yeah, I wanna play like that", I saw the bands who had great stage presence and thought "wow, that's cool, better than just standing there" ...so yeah, I really like players like Steve Vai.

RN: At the moment it seems all the terrible nu-metal bands have kinda died, and there's this new wave of more old school influenced metal bands, ie. Shadows Fall or Killswitch Engage, how do you feel about that? Do you perhaps feel that Dragonforce will be able to appeal to more people now?

H: I never thought of it that way...The second album has all the "duh duh duh!" blastbeats which you don't usually get outside of death metal, so it's just the way we developed. We've always listened to death metal for ages, Seff and I used to play in a death metal band, so it's kinda natural for us to play fast. We always wanna get faster, so when we did the first album we made sure it was faster than the demo, otherwise it would sound worse...but shadows fall, have defiantly got a mixture of styles. There's a mixture of death metal and more modern sounds...I just think that people listen to lots of different stuff, there's a melting pot. The more music you listen to, the more will be involved in your sound...I really love stuff like Death, Children of Bodom - their new work is so good, Soilwork. We're not directly influenced by them, but we think they're

pretty cool! We get inspired by the old bands...but for every old band, there's 200 copies of them!

RN: OK, on this tour you have t-shirts which say things like "3 crap power ballads per album", "don't move on stage", is that a reference to your live show, and show you don't wanna be a clichéd metal band, you really want people to have a good time etc?

H: Well see the funny thing is England is different to Europe. There people were complaining we played too fast, and moving too much on stage - some really strange things, so that was in Europe, not the UK! *forgets to change tape round, d'oh!* ...So the t-shirts say "boring, mid tempo power metal" as a diss to all the people saying "all the songs are fast, it's crap"...but everyone else has fast songs! You don't ask a death metal band to not be heavy! So we just say to them and the press, fuck you! We're not gonna kiss your arse and feel the need to play slower. The slower bands play like that cos they can't do it live...The last European tour was the "shut up" tour, he he...in a way, it's kinda a piss-take of these others bands, and we've got

friends in those bands, and they think it's funny, but some people don't. A lot of the bands feel confident once they get to a certain level, they can just keep releasing the same album again and again and again, and just stand there on stage. "Guitar strap under the chin", when people have their guitars too high and stuff, it's much more fun to slam it!

RN: Cool, what do you guys get up to outside of the band? You have a home studio right? How did you afford it? Well...we wanted it for the first album, the gear was rubbish then, but it's got better now. It's just built up really, it's just for us to record demos and the guitar

parts for the album and stuff. When we did the first album we realised the problem was we've got nothing to reference to...there's not a band that play that fast, for that long, non stop with so many keyboards, so many guitars...it's easier to record a band playing slower...We needed more time to record it, so yeah.

H: We don't really do much outside of the band, this is our job! Yeah we just concentrate on the band really, thinking about the cds, organising the stage risers, the drink holders! When you play so fast you can't stop for a drink, so we have drink holders on our mic stands with straws and shit...

RN: Are you guys thinking of doing a music interview?

H: We were gonna do one for this album...but it kinda fell through because of going on tour and stuff. Sometime, it's hard cos of playing this kind of music you don't get any radio play or TV play. But we've just done a video recorded live in Japan for "my spirit will go on"...Hopefully we'll get it on Kerrang! tv, it's on Mtv in Brazil and so on.

RN: OK, to ask about the name Dragonforce, is it referencing to the fact your very tongue in cheek and basically don't wanna be associated with the more wanky "Muso" side of things?

H: We're all a bunch of fuckwits basically! We don't wanna stand around looking moody, or be super evil or whatever, we have fun, get boozed and try to score chicks afterwards!

RN: I think that's it, unless you have anything else you wanna add?

H: Well anyone reading this has probably missed the show...so we'll be touring next year, and hopefully play some festivals! Cheers for the interview



THE MERCURY LEAGUE

have to admit that I hadn't heard about these guys until I stumbled across them at the Verge in the summer. After being blown away by their live set (we're talking metal influenced melodic punk and a wicked combination of vocals) we managed to talk them into playing the In Arms Reach squat at really short notice. A relatively new, but very hardworking, band that we are no doubt going to see a lot more of over the next year... Thumbs up to Sunderland!

RN: Ok, so for the record, who are you and what do you do?

Dan: Hello my name is Dan and I play bass for The Mercury League. I also do a little bit of singing.

RN: I understand you used to be in a band,

is it 46 Itchy? I'm from down South so I'm not that familiar with them...

Dan: I think the less said about that the better!

RN: Hah, was it the same kind of genre? Dan: No it was skacore. Me, Goo and Greg who play in this band, we all used to play in 46 Itchy. The only one out of this band who had any real creative input was Greg really. I don't know, we just got a bit sick of that for various reasons!

RN: At the moment you're on tour with No Comply. Personally I love cross-genre gigs, I think it brings a varied audience and you can experience something new...But, I'm really interested to know if you think that the same kind of audience who will come and see No Comply would get into The Mercury League?

Dan: Well, it's still the same punk rock basis, but I'm not sure all the kids who are into NC will be into us. I don't want to take anything away from No Comply because they're a really great band and there's a real important message there and stuff, but I see a lot of young kids coming out and some of them really don't seem to get what we're doing. I sometimes think maybe our music would translate better to an older audience but on the other hand, not a lot of these kids know who we are so maybe they want to reserve their judgement. I guess our music is a bit harder than what they're usually into, I wouldn't say straight ahead 'hardcore', but harder edged. I don't want to sound unappreciative, it's amazing we're getting to play to new faces in new places and there's always people who come to shows and say "Oh, that's cool!"



and that's really appreciated, I just hope more young kids get into it.

RN: Yeah, I was thinking about this today when I was watching you play. Obviously, it's tough being the first act on, but there were a lot of people sitting down who, in my opinion, didn't get it - they seemed a bit confused. I think with the band your touring with you end up being targeted at the wrong audience. I realise I sound like a corporate label spokesperson, but you get what I mean?

Dan: Yeah, we've played a lot of shows this year. By the end of the year it will be 109 and probably about 90 of them have been DIY and I found with those that we were playing to a lot older audience who seemed to be really getting into it. But then a night like tonight where I came off stage and said "Oh, people didn't really enjoy that" and I was told "Well, that's Leeds", which I don't think is true at all because we played with Somerset here a while ago and the AKA guys put us on and it went down really well. I think it's just with bigger shows, shows like this, it's hard to be an opening act. People tend to stand back, plus we've only been around for a year, we've only got two demos out. Give it time, I guess! A lot of it is probably more about being shy, you know? People we're responsive tonight and they usually always are but they just don't want to break the ice!

RN: Yeah, I completely agree with what you're saying. I've noticed a lot of people in Leeds being really down on the scene here, which I don't really understand... It was the same thing when Five Knuckle played at Joseph's Well a couple of months ago. You often need someone a bit confident (or drunk) like those crazy Waterintobeer guys to get the ball rolling.

Dan: Hah, true, but a lot of our friends came down and they don't even dance to our music! Or maybe no one likes us (laughs).

RN: Whatever! Anyway, you have two demos out right now, have you got any plans for releasing anything?

Dan: People keep asking us this, but no one's actually come up to us and said anything about putting anything out. We've toured Europe a little and done two pretty big DIY tours of the UK and we've done that off our own back, by recording our own stuff, making our own covers and

stuff. I don't know if you saw me tonight chopping up all the covers and stuffing them in plastic wallets before we came on? I really enjoy doing stuff like that, it makes it feel like we're giving something real to people. Having said that, if someone approached us and wanted to do something, providing it was right for us, I'd be happy to. Even though I enjoy doing everything DIY, it's a lot of hassle to burn 500 CDs, print covers and guillotine them right before going on a 3 week tour, plus it's a lot of money that we don't have usually.

For example, we can't put ads in fanzines or anything like that because we have to pay for our CDs. This all might sound pretty naive, because I know that you have to do deals with even the smallest of labels and I know you can be ripped off. We're not holding out for anything, we love doing this and I think we'll just keep on doing what we're doing regardless.

RN: Yeah, there's a lot in what you just said because bands are getting a lot of shit for using a booking agent like Hidden Talent, but I think most people who stand on the sidelines criticising haven't really considered how difficult it is to be doing everything DIY whilst trying to tour continuously to support yourselves...

Dan: Yeah, it is really difficult, but it's also really rewarding. As with everything, there are pros and cons, Greg basically booked our tour this summer, whatever I said it was, 25 dates? I think with that tour, for

every one show played, there was a least two or three cancelled for that date. We had to start booking that 5 months in advance and Greg had to call in sick for a week or two towards the end just to sit on his computer and sort out the dates. There's so many sketchy people out there! But then, on the other hand there are so many amazing people that always help us out and it's really rewarding when you can make some great friends and think "Hey, we did this ourselves!" Then, we got Hidden Talent offering us this tour and we thought it would be silly not to take it because we get to play to different audiences and bigger venues; all we want at the end of the day is for people to hear our music and hear what we're trying to put across. So, that was an opportunity that we didn't really think we could pass up. I don't know how things will turn out in the future, I guess we'll just see how things are at the end of this tour and then make our minds up! At least we'll have

experienced what it's like to play on the other side of things.

RN: Did you ever listen to Jerry Built? (nodding) You guys kind of remind me of them. They were one of those bands that crept in and gained notoriety almost more through a Chinese whisper network than through internet and fanzines, etc. I guess their problem was that they released a really good record and then disappeared... I mean, you guys all quit your jobs for this tour, right?

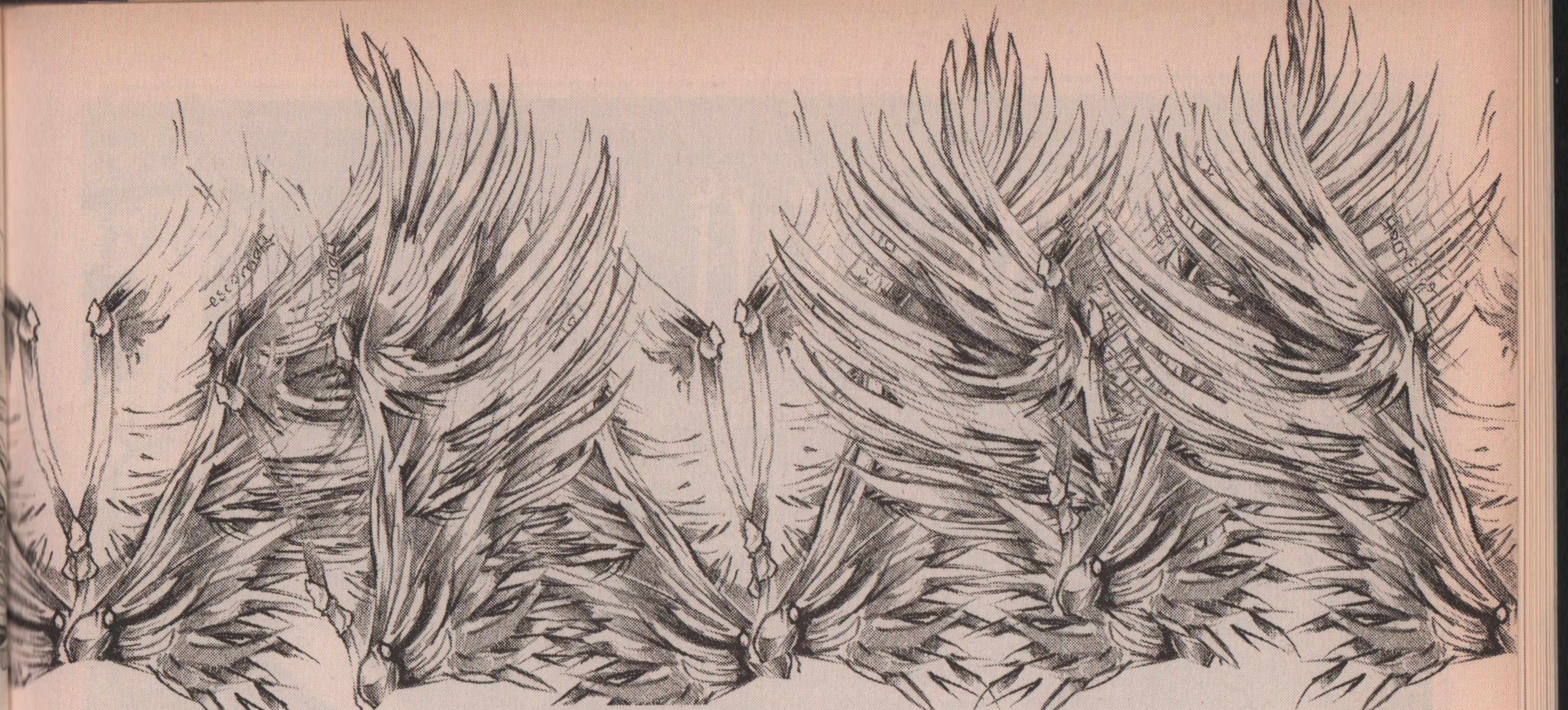
Dan: Yeah, I quit uni and Ben quit, Greg quit... I'm sure we'll try to get jobs when we get back.

RN: So are you feeling like the momentum is going to keep building?

Dan: Well, I don't know what's going to happen when we come off this tour. We finish on the 18th and then have a week for Christmas, get back to practicing because we really want to write some new songs. 2 of the boys got sick before we came away, so we shoulda had 2 new songs for the tour set, which we don't have. Maybe someone will approach us and ask if we want to put something out with them in the new year, which might be nice, and then there's talk of a tour in February/March for 3 weeks that might or might not happen, so we'll just keep on doing what we're doing.

RN: Is it really difficult to write stuff on tour?

Dan: Write on tour?! Doesn't happen at all! When we toured this summer we had a new song written but we just weren't confident enough to play it, so we just played it every day in sound check until we were confident towards the end of the tour and that even made it onto the demo. That was the extent of our writing on tour, just trying to get some practice time together. There's a lot of free time on tour, you know? About 23 and a half hours of waiting around and I think that makes people lose the inclination or the motivation to get their guitars out. I mean, I brought my acoustic on tour and I've just had no motivation to play until we go on. We really write as a band and, creatively, our set is the sum of four parts. We love being in the practice room. I wouldn't say it's 'easy' because we argue a lot about what should go where because we're all influenced by so much different stuff. It's a really good creative time, whereas on



tour the only time we find we can get is in sound check and because we're the opening band usually we don't even always get that, you know? I wish there was time, but either way, there's loads of good ideas floating about so we just save them until we get home.

RN: Yeah, I did a little bit of a tour with a band in the summer and I was so surprised about how much time, after driving, is spent waiting. Is there anything in particular that you do to 'kill time' as such? Anything that helps you feel like you're not wasting your life waiting?

Dan: I bring away a lot of books, which I dip in and out of. I particularly love it when we play with bands like the Antimaniax because I can just raid their info selection and just sit in the van and read really good independent literature which is hard to get hold of and I feel like I'm informing myself or whatever. We've all got different things, for example, Ben will just get out his pad and start playing cause that's what he loves. It's weird because it's so boring but you just have not got the inclination to do anything really constructive! Other than that a lot of time is just spent driving, which of course makes it hard to read!

Chris- I find it really interesting to find out what rituals people have, everyone I ask that question to seems to have something different, I think it was one of the Adequate 7 guys who has those learning Spanish cassettes, other people write diaries...

Dan: Yeah, that's the thing. I remember reading an interview with one of the guys from Propagandhi and people were asking him why he doesn't tour and he just said "because I don't wanna tour! I hate watching the World go by" some people get bored watching the world roll by in a van. But I think I'd rather watch it go by in a van than through an office window. We love playing live, but the thing about driving is so true, even more so in the States or mainland Europe. We only need to drive about 4 or 5 hours to a show here, but it still feels like wasted time - and they're doing ridiculous things like 15 hour drives! If you're really into doing something at home like artwork, or fanzines, or whatever, you really would feel like you're wasting time if you're away from home for such an extensive period. Even though you're doing something you love equally as much it can be hard to see that time roll by. I mean, I heard that Shaun from Five

Knuckle is going to concentrate on his artwork and stuff when he leaves. I'm sure he doesn't feel like he's wasted his time because that band is amazing, but I guess he might feel that the time has come to do something else!?

RN: Ok, we seem to be saying a lot of negative right now which is probably painting the wrong kind of picture for anyone who reads this. It's just that sometimes, you know how you can feel so dragged down by things? There's so many negatives in the world that you could take all the way from globalisation to problems in local communities or society as a whole. What is it that keeps you positive? How you are able to still channel all this creative energy when there is so much negativity in the world?

Dan: How do you mean, exactly?

RN: Well, for example, I've just moved to a new city and there's been a lot of positive, but university, for example, has been something that has really disappointed me. I never thought I'd meet so many people who were right-wing, racist, feeding off their parent's generosity and using the excuse of "I'm a student" to get away with not caring about the community that is hosting them. So, all these things make it hard for me to find inspiration for positive columns to write for fanzines or new creative ideas. Do you know what I mean? How do you keep going?

Dan- Well, it's hard. We've played a lot of shows and done a lot for our local scene, but in the grand scheme of things I don't feel like I've really done that much. But, I don't know, maybe I'm inspired by the stupidly romantic notion of "making a difference". Or the idea that I've got friends who work on the 9-5 treadmill all the time, and they fucking hate it. These people hate it and they know they hate it, but they're totally trapped. I don't want that for me, which might be quite selfish... My only escape from that is to do something creative to the best of my abilities because I'm not the most talented person in the world. We just love getting together and writing music, or when I'm putting on a show, or making friends, that's what keeps me going. It's so hard sometimes, some things can be so disheartening and I just stop listening to music and stop reading fanzines, but then something will change.

For example, I'll meet people like the guys in Stoke.

RN: The End.

Dan: Cheers Chris and a huge thanks to The Fuckin' NC for everything.

RN: The guys who put on shows at the Talbot?

Dan: Yeah, Phil and Rich and Kev and Kate. Nobody goes to their shows, they're amazing shows but nobody goes to them, but they just keep on doing it despite all that. For me, that is amazing. All of it, meeting people like you or my friends from up North, nobody gets anything back but they just keep on trying. That makes me want to pick up my stuff and do what they're doing, it's so inspiring to see what they give to other people and not asking for anything in return, and most of the time losing out financially etc. I don't know whether that's romantic or not? I just don't want to work in a shit job that I hate. I don't want to go to university because that seems to be just a means for what other people want me to do. I just want to live my life for me and ignore people telling me that "you'll make this mistake and that mistake". I'll make my own mistakes and learn from it.

RN: I don't think that's romantic at all. I think I'll end here because my tapes running out, but just to finish, I've been reading a lot of literature recently about how we're pushed into these moulds, how the government or society has these controls over us that go beyond what we're even aware of. For example, we're made to live by their hours, that if we don't wake up in the morning and go to sleep in the evening, there's something wrong. We're total slaves without even knowing it.

Dan: Yeah, exactly, I've really realised all of that in the last two years and I've been having such an inner conflict and feelings of guilt towards my family... I mean, getting back to what I was saying. Personally, I just want to try and live my life for me because we're on this earth for a relatively short period of time and I don't think we'll ever totally break out of the conformity they've put on us, but I'll fucking try to live my life by my rules and do my bit for my friends and people around me. It's so hard and most people who try to do something positive get knocked down, but I guess we can always get back up learn from it and do it again.

RN: The End.

Dan: Cheers Chris and a huge thanks to The Fuckin' NC for everything.

End Notes: Interview: Chris 12-0-5. Picture: Escarriot.

SETTLE-MENTAL

Eye witness account of life in Palestine

"The poll, this stilted, shotgun wedding, had a strange energy — drained, anaemic, and hesitant. Few seemed genuinely enthusiastic. Universal human rights and international humanitarian law were not honoured guests at this celebration. Inviting them might have elicited passions. Had that happened, Abu Mazen might have lost his title of "moderate candidate."... this was a marriage of convenience, a union without passion or much optimism, hastily arranged by the tribal elders in Fatah and the Israeli government to serve their interests," - Quote from www.electronicintifada.net

While the Palestinians were electing a man many said was a thief who had laundered Palestinian Authority funds, but was the best chance for negotiations with Israel, I was in the West Bank, Palestine. Being Jewish and concerned about the blurring of Jewish and Zionist identity from all sides, I thought it was time to go and see for myself what Israel is up to. The absurdity of the Jewish 'right to return' to a country many Jews have never even visited was made explicit when the Palestinian number plated car I was in was pulled over by three terrified looking young soldiers. With M16s pointed at us, one of the soldiers looked at my passport, saw from my surname that I'm Jewish and demanded to know why I didn't have an Israeli passport, as it is my right to claim one. He really couldn't figure out why I was spending my festive season with a Palestinian, on a Palestine road subjecting myself to army harassment.

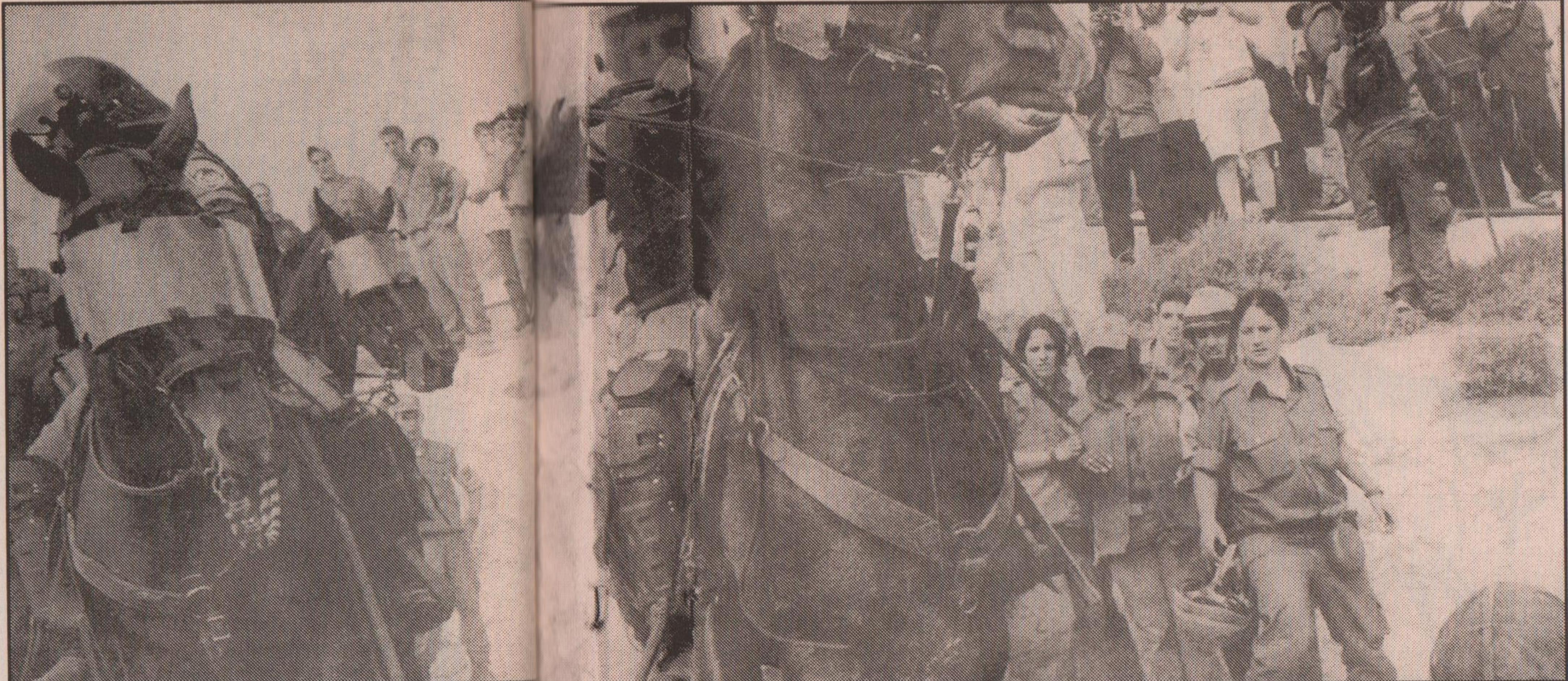
What is most instantly noticeable about

the West Bank is the day to day level of the military occupation. The occupation makes life as undignified, dehumanised and difficult as possible, not just in the incursions, house demolitions and massacres but in daily things like the separate and inferior road systems. Then there's the check points and road blocks cutting people off from their families, friends and work, where all Palestinians have to navigate on foot over mud, concrete mounds and razor wire, with degrading ID checks and searches. Everyone I met told me of people, ancestral homes, places like the seaside that they would like to take their kids, but were unable to visit.

Unsettling

With imposing hill top settlements and smaller obviously placed outposts, the Jewish settlements in the West Bank vary from massive established 'towns,' (such as Ma'ale Adumin with a population of 30,000 of mostly poor settlers lured by state incentives) to rural settlements consisting more of fundamentalist settlers intent on terrorising their Palestinian neighbours. A huge amount of construction work is visibly expanding the settlements beyond what Sharon defends as 'natural expansion,' and building roads cutting off sections of Palestinian land where it can be stolen to join settlements together and disrupt Palestinian life.

The settlers of Itamar and its outposts harassed the 100 villagers of Yanoun, near Nablus, so much that when settlers murdered a 24 year old harvesting olives the villagers packed their bags and left, only to return later when internationals offered to live with them. Staying in the international house I was struck by the



peace of the magnificent landscape, but where outposts dotted the hills above, keeping constant watch and shining a huge search light all night on Yanoun below. The Itamar website calls for donations to fund night surveillance equipment and armoured cars, whilst the village lives in its shadow.

Visiting Hebron, where over 120,000 Palestinians live alongside 500 Israeli settlers protected by 1200 soldiers, is like visiting a ghost town. Its market of 500 shops was closed on military order after a settler fired a machine gun in the Ibrahimi mosque, killing 29. I saw few amongst the bullet holed and settler graffitied shop fronts open, and met a shopkeeper who told me of the collapse of the Hebron economy. He pointed out the settlers who have moved in to houses overlooking the narrow lanes of the market, who chuck out so much litter onto the Palestinians

below that the army has built mesh above the streets to protect them. As we passed under the mesh I noticed it was dented from the impact of great lumps of concrete thrown down, along with fibreglass roof insulation, bricks and plastic bottles. An English activist living in Hebron took me to his home, the only building on the street leading from the market to a settlement that has not been seized by the army. Closely observed by a soldier visible only by the butt of his rifle rustling under combat netting from the house opposite, I was told about his work accompanying children to school after they were attacked by settlers with sticks and chains. More recently the Israeli army have not allowed him to accompany the children, preferring to do the job themselves, leading me to wonder how a Palestinian parent might feel handing their child over to an Israeli soldier for protection.

One Israeli soldier I spoke to told me that he was unhappy having to protect a Gaza settlement on his reserve duty. Along with most Israelis, he doesn't agree with the settlers. He talked about the fear he felt being in the front line of possible 'terrorist' attacks, and how this is the only context in which he met Palestinians. I spoke to many people who recounted stories from older generations where relations between Palestinians and Israelis were possible. Today, however, the potential for dialogue is impeded by total separation. For many Palestinians the only Israelis they meet are soldiers or settlers and for Israelis the only Palestinians they hear about are the suicide bombers. One Israeli man I spoke to told me that before the 2nd Intifada he had Palestinian colleagues at his work in Tel Aviv, but now they are not allowed into Israel to work and, in any case, 'all Palestinians are terrorists and

animals.'

Offering An Olive Branch

On the last day of the year I found myself with Israeli and international activists on a tree planting demonstration where land has been confiscated and olive trees uprooted from the villagers of Jayyous under the guise of enlarging an existing settlement. I wondered what had happened to the olive trees that the villagers had tended for decades and that their economy relies on. An Israeli told me that they are sold to rich yuppie house-owners, and then I remembered the newly planted but very old olive trees I had seen amidst floral displays decorating a settlement I had driven through the day before. The action felt eerie, having to walk for almost 2 hours in the midday heat, as the army decided our route was closed, through the deserted countryside on a symbolic action with no one to read our placards and the media uninterested.

The fence built to separate Jayyous from its land is part of the current plan to build the wall and other obstructions to restrict movement and to separate and isolate Palestinians from each other and from Israeli settlements. As one international put it "If you wanted to put up a fence between your garden and your neighbour's you would have to put it on your side, right? Apparently the state of Israel thinks differently; as in most of the West Bank, the so called "security barrier" is being built well within the 1967 Green Line, so that yet more Palestinian land is confiscated and effectively annexed to Israel."

See also: www.alternative news.org and www.electronicintifada.net and www.icahd.org

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PUNK VOTER TRIAL

'Four More Beers?' — Punk Voter On Trial

Q: Do you think there is a future for Punk Voter, or do you think it's just a means to an end?

Justin Sane: It might be, I don't know because I'm somebody who is considered an adviser and a spokesperson for Punk Voter, but Punk Voter really is Fat Mike's

thing and it's going to be in Fat Mike's hands and I don't know where he's going to go there. I would like to think that it will carry on. If it doesn't Anti-Flag certainly will, and will take the momentum that we've gained from Punk Voter to carry on!

*

As I probed Mr. Sane further that summer it became very clear that any consideration of Punk Voter's future was tantamount to defeat. Morale remained high on the agenda as band after band continued to hawk their blind optimism in the flawed system of representative democracy they saw as the means to their end, introducing a tri-partite political structure into what would have previously been loosely regarded as a unified punk rock movement. Our musical collective was torn apart; the true voice of dissent choosing to relocate its troops in the underground, sitting out on the petty Punk Voter/ Conservative Punk face-off that ensued. Promulgating punk rock further into the mainstream, the culture that once put its queer shoulder to the wheel now

stands accused of achieving little more than a polarised punk community and 600,000 combined sales of the Rock Against Bush sorority CDs, and with the impending prospect of what Punk Voter reincarnate has in store for the next 'four more beers' it's only fair that we look a little more closely at what Punk Voter actually achieved and what the 'party party' have in store for 2008.

On the face of it Punk Voter successfully shifted 600,000 units of the two-pronged Rock Against Bush CD attack (selling 20,000 copies in the first week alone). I'm not sure how much the bands themselves benefited from the record sales, though I doubt Jesse Luscious' shot at local Council off the back of the organisation's campaign would have been have been less successful if he'd been bankrolled somewhat more than the \$17,000 dollars he independently raised. Lest we not forget that the CD sales inadvertently lined George Soros's pockets further, to the tune of an additional 40,000 sales of the 'Uncovered' DVD endorsed within.

Whilst the punk community has somewhat thrived on the necessary debate generated from different political factions contained therein, a divide this big has never been driven through the scene. Many radicals reluctantly penned their ballots strategically this summer before seceding into the background, leaving room in the arena for the 'title fight:' Punk Voter vs. Conservative Punk. Childish banter ensued between the 'Nazis' and the 'Elitist Phonies' as each faction was respectively slandered. Bands turned on each other quicker than Clear Channel, in their race for lefty/righty chic from both the 'Rock Against Bush' and 'Crush Kerry' compilations. Good Charlotte were slammed for their inability to sign to either roster, Propagandhi were dropped for biting the hand that feeds them in refusing to remove a George Soros jibe from their compilation offering and Ben Weasel admirably, and rather eloquently stood as a lone voice of reason against the madness ('Get Bush out? Okay, sure I'm with you! At any cost? No way!').

Dec 6th was a long time in coming, but sure enough Mike Burkett *et al*'s reformed plan of attack eventually landed on the battle-scarred forum of punkvoter.com, and it's good to see that they've taken baby-steps in remedying parts of their inherently

flawed manifesto; though the impetus of democracy remains high on the agenda and is actively encouraged on a grassroots level by The Frisk footsoldier Jesse Luscious. Most notable perhaps is their decision to retire from voter registration and to move towards what they have coined as a 'watchdog/focused issue mode' though whether this will sit on the mainstream plateau they've happily set up camp, or seek to remedy the rift that's grown between Punk Voter and the Radicals once again is yet to be seen. Other plans to boycott Bush's bankroll (though I suspect Clear Channel will prove to be a hypocritical exception to this rule), fight media consolidation and register conscientious objection are of equally notable importance, though it all depends on whether they fail in their overriding interests to 'stay focused, fun-loving, and pissed' which won't come as too much as a surprise to some of you out there, is a dichotomy in itself.

Words + Artwork by Chris Lever

egged ham
by phil mann

STORY TIME

4:30am:
Eyelids are sticky, I feel a twinge...
I forget.

5:32am:
Stirring again, eyelids are no longer sticky.
The T.V. is still on but no sound, that's not
what woke me...
Twinge has turned to a dull wave...
Ignore it. SLEEP!

5:59am:
The T.V. off and there is a silence, my
eyes and body are wide awake, the room
smells damp and the curtains are stiff,
even though the window is open they do
not move...
Silence.

6:07am:
I'm up now, managing to peel myself from
the bed lining that I have become a part of
during a night of sweating profusely. I turn
the clock off, 'fucking thing' I think to
myself.

By now I've turned on my bed lamp and
placed my two size elevens on Crumb
ridden carpet. My hands touch the wet
pillow as I begin to stand. As I begin to
use the chosen form of travel known as
walking (for some of those of the
amphibious breed), the dull wave passes
over me again and crashes into my
stomach as if it had a handful of ships
and dead sailors in its grip. My knees
buckle and buttocks hit wet mattress, the
bulb in the lamp burns out! I sit there in the
dark motionless for a while as the storm
passes by me. My eardrums feel empty,
lonely, begging for the usual repetitions

of sound to show themselves. Nothing.

Staring at the open doorway of my room I
try and find some inspiration and strength
to move again. It works and with ease
surprisingly. In fact the pain has gone
completely and I drift through the doorway
and on to the landing, down the stairs I go
still feeling half raped by the mist of sleep.
I am now half way down the staircase
and I notice something that picked on my
brain when I first left my room, every single
door including the entrance door to the
house is completely wide open. I slow
down toward the bottom of the stairs and
walk even slower past the gapping front
door; my left eyeball inspecting what lurks
outside of it. No one, no rubber tires
moving, just stagnant hunks of steel by
the side of the road, still houses, and no
one about. A black sheet of cloud covers
the sky unmotivated to drift. No noise,
nothing. The pain stabbed at me again,
this time less of the dullness but more of a
nausea moving from my gut up my torso
and holding with unbearable grip to my
stomach.

I wait...swaying.

My hand slams the front door and follows
me to the kitchen past open doors and
floral wallpaper, which, to me, always
seemed to just hang and float in front of
the plastered walls. Mountains of rusted
pots and pans covered the pattern on the
leno kitchen floor like a caterers junkyard;
the thousands of cracks that lined the
cutlery rooted themselves to worktops and
surrounding ornaments. I walk the safe
path that I had cleared for myself days
ago, no weeks, months, years.

I pull open the fridge door and remove
some red leister and egged ham and make
my way back to the worktop. Back at the
worktop I brush the plates out of eye line
as I do so it hits me again, this time
indescribable, as if I was receiving the
ultimate punishment for weeding out the
chosen spot for the cutlery to bury their
roots. On my back among the pots and
pans, wooden handles gouging at me, I
hear myself moaning out loud, as, what
feels like an infected razor blade full of
pain and woe moves feather up, passing
my stomach to escape out y mouth...I can't
stop it!

Shaking, I clamber to my feet knocking the
rusted pans left and right with my haste;
to and fro. I make it up the stairs missing a
few on the way, with an array of things
flashing in my head as I try and keep in
what ever wants to come out.

I fall to my knees directly in front of the
white porcelain thrown and let it out. A
splash of black mess pours from me,
coating the toilet bowl like thick emulsion.
None of it floats, just sinks into the water
and curls up at the bottom. It keeps pulling
me forward for more, without asking,
dragging it out of me via the mouth. Three
more bursts and my eyes have had
enough gathering themselves together at
the top of my skull. I fall forward, mind
popping, almost getting my hair in it.....
...Got to move my hands now!

Warm breath rises from the still black, like
needles lighter than air crawling up my
cheeks and waking me, my eyes have
come home and the pain has left town. I'm

cold. I use my hands this time to lift my
hair out of my eye line, this is better and
now for some clothes, I don't want a
thought about anything else at this
moment.

What's this?
WHAT IS THIS?

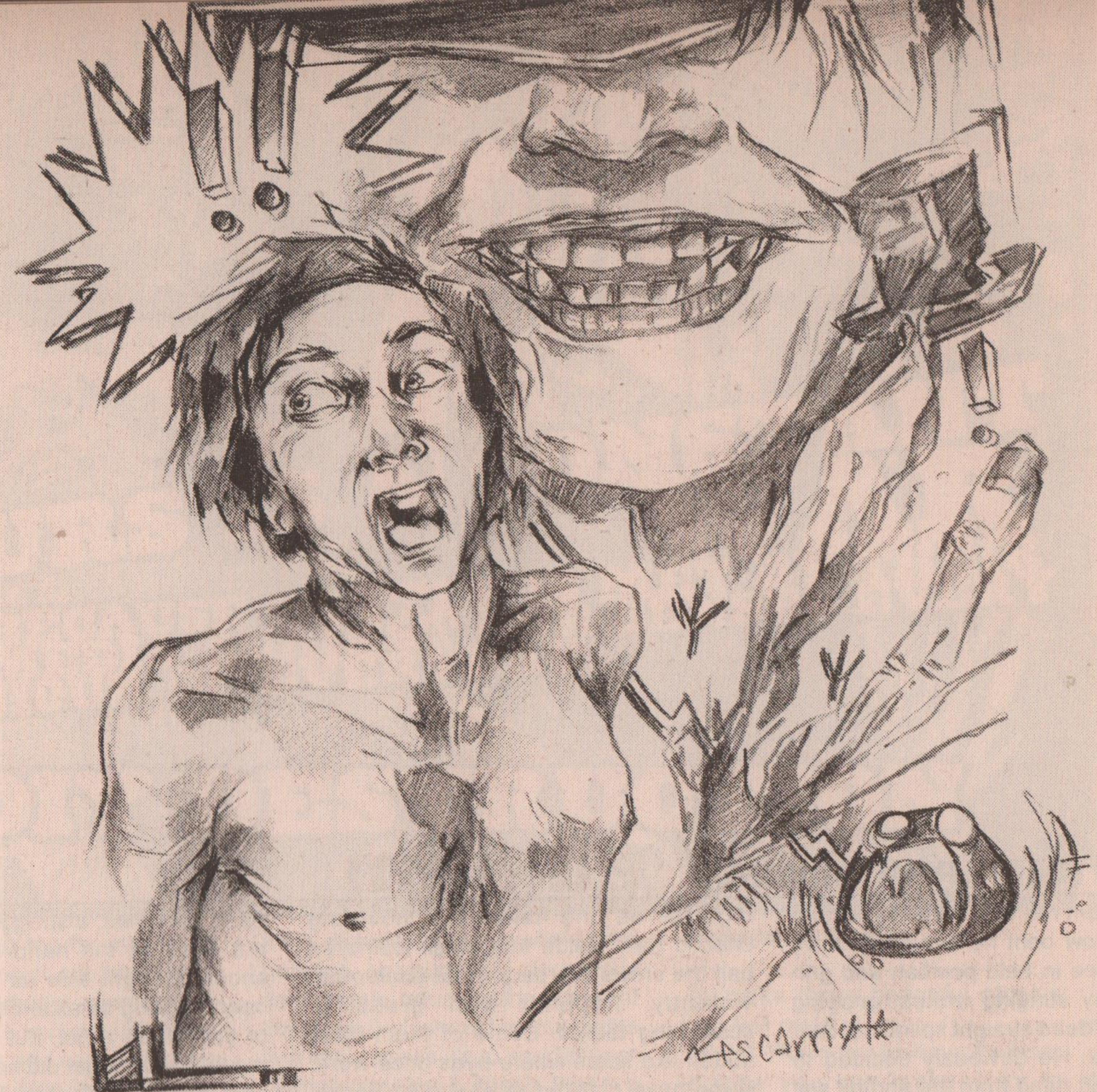
It appears to be a nearly unnoticeable thin
lank hair, leading out from my navel. This
hair in question or what was thought to
be a hair has snaked its way passed every
other hair down to where my stomach
hair meets the pubic hair on my lower half.
This hair is not touching any protruding
part on me. I grab at it with a palm and it is
smeared across my belly, I compare it with
what's in the toilet bowl. This is the same.
With a deep breath I look up at the crusty
light bulb hanging from the damp ceiling
and put my index finger in my navel. I dig
around shaking a bit, I can feel something
just under the surface, a solid, rounded
and hard. I poke at it a bit more violently
and my finger goes, slipping, deeper in:
first joint, second joint, I've now got my
whole finger up to the third knuckle
through my navel poking around inside
myself frantically, no pain, no blood, just
deadness, like having your finger in a
dead chicken, like stabbing dead skin on
the heel of your foot with a nail file. I'm
really at it now and droplets of stale
sweat fall from me fast as my finger
fidgets about and I can feel my little nail
scratching at something, that dam
something that started all this! Losing it a
couple of times I hook it and begin to
extract, a fluid like pop and a sound that
resembles a pebble hitting wood, my

finger is out. My sweat has formed a dank
puddle below me, I notice this because
I'm kneeling in it, bare legged and bare
kneed. Right to the puddle lie's that little
bastard, perfectly oval, no smaller than a
kidney bean and again black like I've never
seen.

It opens its mouth in my head! 'Get up and
go down stairs now!' I rise up with the
squealing in my cranium, not speech but
tiny legible squealing from a translucent
hair that has snaked its way passed every
other hair down to where my stomach
hair meets the pubic hair on my lower half.
This hair is not touching any protruding
part on me. I grab at it with a palm and it is
smeared across my belly, I compare it with
what's in the toilet bowl. This is the same.
With a deep breath I look up at the crusty
light bulb hanging from the damp ceiling
and put my index finger in my navel. I dig
around shaking a bit, I can feel something
just under the surface, a solid, rounded
and hard. I poke at it a bit more violently
and my finger goes, slipping, deeper in:
first joint, second joint, I've now got my
whole finger up to the third knuckle
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myself frantically, no pain, no blood, just
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dead chicken, like stabbing dead skin on
the heel of your foot with a nail file. I'm
really at it now and droplets of stale
sweat fall from me fast as my finger
fidgets about and I can feel my little nail
scratching at something, that dam
something that started all this! Losing it a
couple of times I hook it and begin to
extract, a fluid like pop and a sound that
resembles a pebble hitting wood, my

neck through the kitchen into the garden
dragging some pots on the way, no
breeze. Clumps of grass gather in bails
beneath my unkempt toenails and I can
see the grass is over grown but I can't lift
my feet above it. I arrive at the foot of the
tree and unbuckle my neck and look up.

There is a man standing at the top arch of
the tree, balanced in a tight dark blue suit
jacket with two buttons holding it together,
his hands in the pockets each side, the
long tails of the jacket ran into thin straight
pocket less slacks, which also ran tight
to his thighs and over awkward knee caps
down bony shins to worn leather shoes,
a large top hat rested on his crown. I could
not see eyes, only teeth, his face
contorted with a grin. Still balanced he
looked or rather faced me with his greasy
hair which hung down the front, sides
and back of his head like withered hay,
with a nose poked just through it. That
little bastard twitched inside my closed
palm and the man let out a laugh without
laughing, a snigger, just air shooting in
short bursts from his nostrils, air that
collided with the bottom set of teeth
growing unevenly from the yellow gum of
his over sized lower jaw, which came far
forward of the top lip that flapped like a
small curtain, the whites of my eyes stung
as I looked at him. My palm pulsated as
the twitching became more rapid and
eager, and as it did the man did, sniggering
and shaking very slightly, like a junky. His
face locked and unmoveable he stepped
along the bark with hands hidden in
pockets towards me, shaking but a
balance unfaulted.



EGGED HAM - PHIL MANN

Three foot from me with creaking leather and knees now bent he crouched down above me face in held position and grin locked on my stinging whites, gripping my spine in a dead straight splint that can't be splintered. He obviously decided to remove his left hand from the shrunk suit jacket because it was out stretched before me. I looked at the hand, arm, shoulder, and face of the man, an expression now changed, a deep seeded look and grinding molars. 'Give me to him!' said that pulsating bastard once more. I lift my arm and me and the hatter exchange gifts: mine to him, the mouth hiding troublemaker, his to me: release. A laugh with air passing teeth and then a sound like a million un-milked babies screaming and Jesus' heart pierced with a stake with the words written hate.

My wrinkled frown is facing the skyline now and I have a firm focus on it or rather a firm focus with unblinking eyes on the screaming black net, which is attached to the skyline. Massive and swinging with feathered frenzy, this net is full and all the while in the furthest most corner of my eye he is staring at me, fixed, as I observe the mass moving, taunting neighbouring fencing, chimneys and trees, as they dangling from their roots as it does. With a mute the screaming is halted and the cancer from the net has broke free, pouring out down and up into the sky, separated a thousand crows flapping in unison, fresh wings cut atmosphere fast and scatter the gray with capitol X's. A step back from the tree and the crows are gaining on their path to it, the stagnant stone of near by houses reflects the passing silhouettes the mortar and brick then age and crumble. I have followed every single one; they are all with us now brining themselves all

together as one halted and hovering chaotic ball. Inside that black-feathered ball the crows are pecking at each other violently, flapping with grabbing, scratching talons. Some of them have button like scars where eyes once were, some have cracked or shattered beaks, one had no beak at all, just a small perfectly rounded head with a fleshy gapping hole where it once sprouted from, the black shrivelled tongue loosely hanging out would shake madly with each half squawk. It was still trying to peck at the others.

Suddenly the man rows from a crouch to a half crouch and with unfolded hand presented his gift to the crows. One emerged from the dead centre of the pandemonium and took the seeded one with grace from the withered palm it was presented on. This crow in question, although a product from the centre of the flock, its beak was smooth with perfect formation...no scars among feathers...no eyes a miss. It was paced with its flight; transfixed I witnessed its slow motion compared to the rest, standing out in half speed, a flap of wings every other second I found a comfort in its levitation. But this was short lived, the crow was now with the others and the cargo was to.

The sky was still in its position as was I. My belly sunk outwards, doing so without my consent as the tight trousers of the hatter bent out straight, an act prompted by fully extending his legs. The crows now calmed slightly, the old tall hat inches from them, tatters on the edges move from the pushed air created. Indentations deepen in the soles of my feet and the hatter this time removes his right hand from the tight jacket pocket. I sensed extra

effort flood him, a struggle almost entails but goes as the hand is out. A shiver shook my right side as the hand curled open, looking small and a perfect replica of the left as a fist, but when it opened out the index finger did not stop extending past the other fingers. With authority it curled out ungracefully, popping at each knuckle, faltering the arm with its construction. Now fully erect the finger stretched out a foot and a half long with an easily identifiable rotting nail at its tip, swinging the arm over the sky and houses the ball moved slightly. My eyes watered and stung more. The finger and arm moved up like a pendulum and stopped, pointing through the houses toward the deep black forest that seemed to have grown in a heart beat.

The hatter let out some laughing air and the crows swooped and bolted off as quick as they came, down low to the ground together, through the ally ways that divide the houses and into the voided forest. My right side still in full convolution my eyes now harbouring the water and restricting my vision. I try to look, I cant, I only hear laughing air projecting out. In a vein attempt I unlock my arms and still convulsing rub my eyes.....

They are now rubbed and wide, my eyes. The sky is blue, the air is clear, not a cloud in sight. A neighbour waves calmly at me from an open window as I stand in the garden below the empty tree. I can see the clock on the kitchen wall through the open back door:

1:07PM

THE END.



Before we jump too far into all of this I'd like to point out that this is the 'fuck everybody' approach to adverts, and it's invasion of public space. Liberals and cops would be well advised to stop reading now!

It might also be good to note that issue 6 of Rancid News covered a lot of stuff specific to graffiti, stencilling and flyposting if that's how you want to go about reclaiming space. It's not something I'll be discussing in this article so check out your back issues!

CHOPPING THE FUCKERS DOWN
Trust me there's really nothing much better - except the sound of plate glass windows being smashed - than the sound of the slow creaking wood, as the board strains against its final support, before this finally snaps, and it cascades to its concluding 'boom' when a billboard is cut down. Seeing the pathetic pieces of wood lying there reminds you that you also don't need to put up with advertising invading your public spaces, we are the ones who are in charge, we just rarely exert our true power.

Cutting down a billboard is as easy as it sounds, it's just slightly intimidating, and fairly time consuming.

My friend swears that the best way to deal with billboards is to take it one strut a night. After four nights the 'beast will be slain'. I don't doubt the method's effective, I'm just not sure about it's safety either for pedestrians (you really don't want to be responsible for almost

a ton of wood falling on some poor person), or yourself (I personally don't like to return to the scene of the crime I've committed four nights in a row - unless it's to shoplift from Sainsburys but I guess that's a whole other story!).

My method runs like this: Go as a two or three. One acts as a look out - with the obligatory map, to indicate their lost - whilst the other saws. Swap after each strut so that you don't get too tired. Standard billboards have four struts, with the middle two acting as the main stabilisers. As such you should work on the outside struts first. Once they're cut you should get a rope around the top of the billboard (again we don't want this falling on people) and tying it to something solid. I've actually started to do this at the beginning of the 'destruction', after a billboard fell down after cutting only one outside strut (!).

Unsurprisingly the best thing to use to get the job done is a big wood saw!

PAINTBOMBS

When I finally learnt how to make these it felt as though a little bit of me was finally completed. The answer to all my problems as I pass that McDonalds at 3am without a brick to hand. This is the best approach I can think of if you want to make a big impression and get away quickly. Though spraying slogans or stencils can be quick, it can't be nearly as fast as simply throwing an object. Besides there is really nothing quite as satisfying as hurling something at an Army

Recruitment Centre.

To make these beautiful objects you will need:

- Paint. The more you have the more bombs you can make. I try to always get gloss because it's a complete pain in the neck to get it off (especially on windows). The only problem is that gloss only comes in small tubs, and is expensive.

Having said that B&Q is pretty easy to steal from (especially with the "left-handed" technique!). Red paint is of course the obvious choice, especially for arms companies, and animal abusers.

- Water balloons or condoms (as we once had to use). I don't recommend using condoms, a. they're gross and b. you get much less space in the 'bomb' to put paint into.

- Candles. It seems to be that you'll get half the amount of bombs as you have candles. So 12 candles = 6 bombs.

- A cooker and a pan you don't mind getting completely wrecked.

- Bowl of cold water.

- A funnel is pretty useful (for putting paint into the wax) but not essential.

- White spirit (for thinning the paint - especially if you have gloss paint). Again not essential, but helpful for cleaning up afterwards!

- A kitchen in a house/ flat/ squat you don't plan on using as a bail address.

- Gloves. It's wax, you're gonna leave fingerprints if you don't (duh!).

Then you:

- Put the candles into a pan, and on

Six myths about Direct Action!

Direct action—that is, any kind of action that bypasses established political channels to accomplish objectives directly—has a long and rich heritage in the UK, extending back to the Diggers of the 1600s and beyond. Despite this, there are many misunderstandings about it, in part due to the ways it has been misrepresented in the corporate media.

1. Direct action is not political expression, but criminal activity.

Unfortunately, whether or not an action is illegal is a poor measure of whether or not it is just. The Jim Crow laws were, after all, laws. To object to an action on the grounds that it is illegal is to sidestep the more important question of whether or not it is ethical. To argue that we must always obey laws, even when we consider them to be unethical or to enforce unethical conditions, is to suggest that the arbitrary pronouncements of the legal establishment possess a higher moral authority than our own consciences, and to demand complicity in the face of injustice. When laws protect injustice, illegal activity is no vice, and law-abiding docility is no virtue.

2. Direct action is unnecessary where people have freedom of speech.

In a society dominated by an increasingly narrowly focused corporate media, it can be almost impossible to initiate a public dialogue on a subject unless something occurs that brings attention to it. Under such conditions, direct

action can be a means of nurturing free speech, not squelching it. Likewise, when people who would otherwise oppose an injustice have accepted that it is inevitable, it is not enough simply to talk about it: one must demonstrate that it is possible to do something about it.

3. Direct action is alienating.

On the contrary, many people who find traditional party politics alienating are inspired and motivated by direct action. Different people find different approaches fulfilling; a movement that is to be broad-based must include a wide range of options. Sometimes people who share the goals of those who practice direct action while objecting to their means spend all their energy decrying an action that has been carried out. In doing so, they snatch defeat from the jaws of victory: they would do better to seize the opportunity to focus all attention on the issues raised by the action.

4. Direct action is exclusive.

Some forms of direct action are not open to all, but this does not necessarily mean they are without worth. Everyone has different preferences and capabilities, and should be free to act according to them. The important question is how the differing approaches of individuals and groups that share the same long-term goals can be integrated in such a way that they complement each other.

5. Direct action is cowardly.

This accusation is almost always made by those who have the privilege of speaking and acting in public without fearing repercussions: that is to say, those who have power in this society, and those who obediently accept their power. Should the heroes of the French Resistance have demonstrated their courage and accountability by acting against the Nazi occupying army in the full light of day, thus dooming themselves to defeat? For that matter, in a nation increasingly terrorized by police and federal surveillance of just about everyone, is it any wonder that those who express dissent might want to protect their privacy while doing so?

6. Direct action never accomplishes anything.

Every effective political movement throughout history, from the struggle for the eight hour workday to the fight for women's suffrage, has made use of some form of direct action. Direct action can complement other forms of political activity in a variety of ways. If nothing else, it highlights the necessity for institutional reforms, giving those who push for them more bargaining chips; but it can go beyond this supporting role to suggest the possibility of an entirely different organization of human life, in which power is distributed equally and all people have an equal and direct say in all matters that affect them.

Now go try it out for yourself!

DIY DESTRUCTION CONT...



a low heat let them melt. Once melted fish out the wicks of the candles, they get in the way. Keep stirring to keep it liquid.

- Fill a balloon (condom) to about the size of a satsuma, or lemon. When you've got enough water in it seal it with your thumb and forefinger, don't tie a knot in it.

- Put the balloon into the wax. Make sure you get wax almost to where you're holding it (so that it's easier to seal up later).

- Put the balloon into the bowl of cold water to make the wax solidify.

- Repeat about 10 times, or until you feel satisfied that it's coated thickly enough.

- Now let the water out of the balloon, and pull it out of the wax cast.

- Pour in the paint.

- Seal up the hole with more wax from the pan using a spoon. (I've found that dropping cold water into the wax, and then quickly getting the partially solidified piece of wax out of the pan makes it easier to seal it up.) Once sealed you can thicken the seal by putting into the wax and then into the cold water a few times!

- Repeat until you have enough to paint the town red. (I should have gone into comedy I really should have!)

- A quick word of warning, don't have the wax too hot. If you do it will just melt your cast, either when you submerge it to make the cast thicker, or when you're trying to seal the cast up.

GLASS ETCHING SOLUTION

A kid stumbles with his water bottle in the

town's shopping centre. Most of the water appears to hit the GAP window. Rather than just evaporating off, the glass suddenly appears to blemish, roughen, and become opaque. Welcome to the wonderful world of glass etching solution.

Smashing windows is cool, but it's not exactly subtle. You also can't really spell out a clear message with broken glass other than 'fuck you', which is probably adequate enough, but sometimes doing a little advertising whilst destroying property can be a good thing.

Glass etching solution is pretty cheap, and can be got from most art stores. It looks like water (but don't mix them up because this shit will kill you pretty quick if you drink it). It's perfect for putting cool messages on windows, or just for wrecking them without the hassle of finding a rock.

To put a message on the glass you need to get a stencil and some tape. Tape stencil on window. Accidentally trip with the lid off the bottle (whoops!) and pour onto the stencil. Leave quickly.

Another method - which I haven't used - is to find a flower humidifier to spray a smaller amount of etching solution onto the glass. It apparently creates a cleaner image.

DON'T GET CAUGHT!

We dealt with this in #6 but I guess security is something that always needs to be talked about.

If you're out doing stuff that you're not supposed to be don't stand around looking suspicious. Keep moving, and look like you're heading somewhere. If asked by the cops why you're in the area have a good reason ('going home normally works')

Wear gloves if possible, and a cap or beanie (to hide your face from any 'eyes in the sky').

Go out with a friend. Leave any and all ID at home. Take as much money as you think you're going to need in worst case scenario. If you haven't been arrested before - or even if you have - have a fake name and a bail address that isn't your home handy. You need to have worked this out with a friend beforehand because the cops are more than likely going to go round your bail address and ask if you live there (it's not like they have anything better to do).

If you do get caught keep quiet, and wait till you get to talk to your lawyer.

Oh yeah by the way we at Rancid News think you're bad, bad, and naughty people if you go out and do anything illegal. *Ahem* Honest!



Vegans and indeed vegetarians can fit into one of two categories. Those who find their diet difficult and are permanently tempted by meat and animal based foods and those to whom such food are completely and utterly outside the box, proving no temptation whatsoever. For the later, being vegan is easy, as long as all the health requirements of our bodies are satisfied by the diets they choose, for the former, giving up meat and fish is often very difficult, and forsaking all animal products nearly very compromising to their enjoyment of food. I myself went vegan a couple (almost three) years ago for various reasons and I was alone in my choice knowing of no other vegans and very few vegetarians. My girlfriend at the time was a vegetarian who was absolutely disgusted by meat whereas I myself loved the stuff but could no longer feel comfortable eating it, or any animal foods for that matter. It has remained that way since, I am very tempted to eat meat and dairy foods at all times when I'm hungry and have to be constantly reminded of the reasons why I made the decisions to give them up in the first place. For the sake of people like myself I am not going to start going on about how being vegan is easy and that all your many taste-buds can easily be satisfied with alternatives like beans and chickpeas. They probably can't, and one thing is true, being vegan is a major sacrifice, and quite a big one. However, if you use vegan ingredients well really good meals can be fairly easily put together that does provide the palette with all it's taste requirements, from sweet food to rich food. The good thing is if you are successful in constructing a good tasty vegan diet which provides all your nutritional requirements and leaves you feeling full after a meal, it is very satisfying. I have done just that and through a love of cooking and having spent much time trying to convince friends and family just how tasty and more relevantly satisfying vegan food can be. I try to use as many good supplements in this as possible as many vegans tend to eat bulky dishes of pasta, rice or alternative grain with various vegetables and flavouring, and while such dishes are often very tasty, I found myself bored of them. Holland and Barrett produce a load of really nice meat and cheese supplements which allows vegans to eat structured meals, i.e. pies and sausages and meaty roasts, with vegetables and what not. Linda McCartney products are also really good (though many of them aren't vegan) and the Linda McCartney Sausages can be used for loads of stuff, like sausage and mash, sausage sandwiches or cut up and added to rice dishes or casseroles. Sometimes a meal like that is just what you need and the supplements more often than not are made to contain the proteins, which as a vegan one would not generally receive.

Vegans should be aware that while cutting out all animal products can be very healthy, it can be equally as damaging if some of the very specific nutritional requirements of the body are not met. Animal foods are very high in fat and cholesterol, cholesterol though necessary in very small amounts, in excess builds up in the blood vessels increasing blood pressure and leads to a whole range of problems. Fatty foods are generally to be avoided as they are very high in calories. Animal foods are also ridiculously high in toxins through all the shit they feed the animals these days! these toxins just float round your body and cause anything from halitosis (bad breath) to cancer. The problem is that animals are high in protein, in fact meat is protein though there is a common misconception that you need far more protein than you actually do. It is easily possible to get everything we need and more from vegan foods but all vegans should know what they require and which foods provide which nutrients.

Protein is made from 20 amino acids, all are required in the diet though the body can itself manufacture 11 of them if required. 9 of the amino acids absolutely have to be consumed within in the diet in order to remain healthy. A complete protein contains all 20 and a partial protein can contain any combination of them. Protein is in everything you eat to some extent though the main sources for a vegan would be from pulses, which are beans and chickpeas, as well as in grains and wheats and also meat supplements and soya milk. Most people assume that we need much more protein than we actually do, as most people aren't trying the increase muscle mass. The body however is largely built out of proteins and proteins are at the heart of all our physiological reactions and as such it is important that we get what we do need. Damage to the body through mal nutrition will not manifest quickly nor will it be obvious, but the effects are none the less undesirable and in most cases irreversible, however subtle they may be. Growing children need very different nutritional requirements than adults and I would be very begrimed to suggest that a child be given a vegan diet until you have consulted someone who absolutely knows what they are talking about [though many people disagree with me on this!]. These beans and chickpeas are really easily added to recipes such as pasta and risottos and even curries. It's worthwhile doing as they rarely effect the taste and provide bulk to the food without excess carbohydrate. Soya is the only pulse to contain all 20 amino acids and every vegan should try to eat soya products, especially soya milk since it's often fortified with calcium. Most soya milks contain more calcium than dairy milk, though many people don't like it, so I've included a small section on how to make soya milk taste good.

Calcium as everyone knows is intrinsic in bones and teeth, but it is also very important in many physiological processes, especially those involved in muscle contraction and the nervous

systems. Calcium is easily obtainable and is added to most soya milks to make them a true supplement to dairy milk. Other than soya milk, green vegetables such as broccoli, and dark green leafy vegetables like cabbage contain large amounts of calcium as do nuts. This source of calcium is also said to be more readily, and easily absorbed into the body than calcium, which comes from milk (see Lipgloss's column in #8 of this zine). If absolutely necessary you can buy obscenely over priced mineral water with added calcium.

Vitamins are probably the nutrients best catered for in a vegan diet. Fruits and vegetables are loaded with vitamins and if you eat a large selection of different coloured fruits and vegetables there is no reason why you would not obtain all the vitamins you need. Vitamins A, Vitamin B12 and Vitamin D are really the only vitamins that anyone with a reasonably healthy diet need worry about and these can be obtained from a number of sources. Vegan Vitamin tablets usually contain more than enough of every single required vitamin though if like myself you require a more natural source, vitamin A can be obtained through yellow and green vegetables and orange fruits. Vitamin B12 is very abundant in marmite and in

nutritional yeast, which can be added to foods to give them a cheesy taste, vitamin D is actually a hormone and is created by the body with exposure to sunlight, about 15 minutes sun everyday should provide you with plenty.

Iron deficiencies, though not overly common in vegans, are generally on the increase in society. A vegan has very different sources of iron to someone with an alternative diet and one should be very conscious to include enough iron in the diet. Dark green vegetables, fortified cereals, wholegrain bread and grains are all really good for iron. At least one food high in iron should be consumed daily, in order to get energy levels high. Vegans should be aware that many of the aforementioned substances can and are stored (and partly produced) by the body and as such a deficiency in any one of them will not occur straight away. Every vegan should make sure they are getting everything they need before one occurs. I consider it a personal mission to make veganism a healthier, enviable way of life, not an inconvenience and not a chore. Many people have stereotypes of vegans and malnourished, sickly and weak, and we should all aim to prove that it's not the case, it's in truth a very healthy way of living.

Oily!

STUFFED MUSHROOM STARTER

This is a lovely starter dish for a more traditional meal, I've stolen this from a cook book. serves 3

Ingredients: 2 smallish leeks, 3 medium sized potatoes, 3 Portobello mushrooms (the really big flattish ones). Prepare classic mash from potatoes as stated.

Remove stalks from mushrooms and scrape the black underside bits away with a spoon.

Add a small bit of oil to a frying pan and lightly fry both sides of

the mushrooms, approx 5 mins for both sides. Chop ends off leeks and slice into strips, fry strips in oil after removing mushrooms from the pan, add ore oil if necessary. Meanwhile, stuff the underside of the mushrooms with the mashed potatoes. Once leeks are soft and brown, place on top of the mashed potatoes. Place stuffed mushrooms into a high preheated oven for 10 mins. Serve!

SHEPARD'S PIE

This classic dish uses red split lentils instead of any type of meat and it works really well. Serve with stir fried cabbage in soya sauce and roasted broccoli.

Ingredients: one can kidney beans, 6 finely chopped mushrooms, two cans chopped tomatoes, one onion, three medium sized carrots peeled and sliced, 4 large potatoes worth of mash, 2 cups split lentils, two stock cubes.

1. Fry sliced onion in some oil in a large cooking pan, add the carrots, 2. When the onion is soft add the cans of tomatoes, the kidney beans and the lentils, stir until all is mixed well.

3. Add two table spoons soya sauce, good sprinkle of mixed herbs. 4. Leave to simmer until the lentils have absorbed most of the liquid, if more water is needed add as required. Add the stock cubes. 5. When lentils are soft and all crunchiness has gone and liquid been absorbed transfer to a deep baking tin or casserole dish. 6. Spread thick layer of mashed potato on top of pie. Add vegan cheese if you want. 7. Place under hot grill until potato is brown. 8. Serve.

SHEPARD'S PIE

This dish is based on the traditional Mexican dish where strips of meat are eaten with peppers wrapped in bread tortillas.

Ingredients: 1 red, 1 green pepper, one normal size can of kidney beans, one onion, tomato puree, two smallish tomatoes, one sachet of fajita seasoning (available most supermarkets), two cloves garlic.

Preparation: Slice the peppers and onion fairly small and fry 5 mins in

vegetable oil. Dice the tomatoes and crush or chop finely the garlic, add to frying pan, fry for 5 mins. Add beans, half the sachet of seasoning and a good squirt of puree. Mix all ingredients well. Fry until all the ingredients are softish and covered in fajita mix. Heat bread tortillas in warm oven for 5 mins. Serve.

VEGAN MASH

Roasting is the number one best way to cook vegetables. Combine roast veg with a good vegan meat supplement or nut roast for a fine Sunday dinner.

One generic roasting recipe is suitable for all vegetable you may desire to roast.

Cover vegetables in a reasonable amount of good olive oil. About 1/2 table spoon for every 10x10cm area.

Add a good sprinkle of salt once again covering all veg, add pepper, same amount if not more.

-Serve!

• Add a good sprinkle of mixed herbs, even better use rosemary, thyme and or oregano instead.

• A good splash of soya sauce.

Keep different veg separate as they all have different cooking times. Carrots and potatoes take the longest about 1 - 1 1/2 then root veg like parsnip, then cauliflower and the quickest is broccoli. When the veg are quite soft with a browned outside they are ready.

WINTER CASSEROLE

A thick casserole with chunky vegetables in a rich tangy gravy. **Ingredients:** 3 Potatoes, 3 Carrots, 2 sticks celery, 3 Linda McCartney or other Veg sausages, 1 onion, tomato puree, 2 stock cubes, Chilli powder, mixed herbs, vegetarian gravy granules.

Preparation: Dice potatoes (skins on), peel and chop carrots into thick chunks. Boil in Pint and a half of well salted water 15mins.

Meanwhile, fry sausages in oil and when soft cut each into four equal chunks and add chopped onion and celery (chopped into 2cm chunks).

When sausages are firm and

onions are brown add fried ingredients to boiling water.

• Add stock cubes, two table spoons of gravy granules, 1/3 tube of puree, good sprinkle of herbs, small sprinkle of chilli powder, season with black pepper.

• Simmer for 10mins, fairly low heat, then move to casserole dish and cook in high pre heated oven until all ingredients are soft, usually about 1 - 1 1/2 hours.

• Serve with crusty bread

SOYA MILK

Soya milk generally isn't very nice but there are ways of making it better.

Custard power is generally vegan, so make soya custard, make sure you do it in a pan, as in the microwave the soya milk has a tendency to go funny, heat the milk slowly or it will curdle.

Milkshakes. Vegan milkshake powder is readily available and soya milkshakes are really nice, although

the power usually has sugar in it so it's still better to use sweetened soya milk.

Vegan Coco-pops. Combine 3 table spoons of chocolate milkshake powder with a large bowl of rice crisps and just enough milk to make the vegan equivalent of this fine cereal.

The final, and some would argue the most important factor, of choosing to be a Vegan, is the food you can cook and eat, and more to the point, how can vegan cooking produce beautifully delicious, interesting and moreish dishes? The answer is quite easily, though cooking is something which many people do not find comes naturally and they often need a few hints to get them going in the right direction. I myself am by no means a master but I have experimented with a few key vegan ingredients and have managed to put together a few recipes that me and my friends have enjoyed many times as well as some other ways of making small complimentary dishes which people would not associate with veganism. There are loads of vegan cook books available but I find that adding just a few really good dishes to your repertoire makes mealtimes exponentially more enjoyable than the daily pasta and sauce, humus and bread grind. The dishes that follow I made up myself, all are fairly makeshift and the quantities are slightly uncertain as I tend to make stuff up as I go along. If it looks like it's going a bit wrong then improvise, though I've been assured they are good.

Record Reviews

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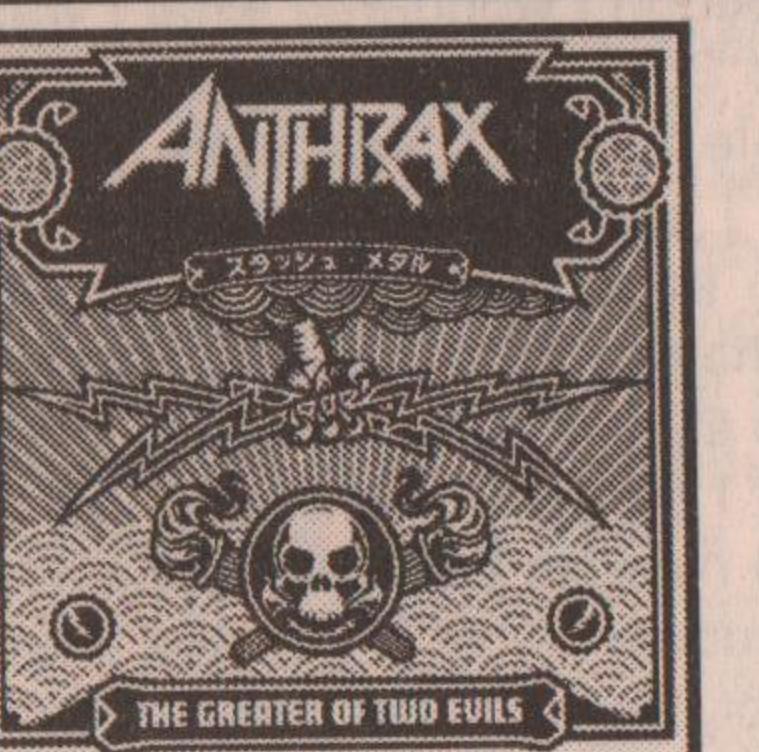
Ampere S/T 7"

This was produced for a tour, I presume of the States and 'tis their demo pressed to wax. The 7" is one sided with the b-side covered in a nice screenprint. Ampere are ex-Orchid and Wolves and are very good, kind of a continuation to the last Orchid LP. Actually, listening to this more regularly I'd go further and say this is fucking excellent. It has now sold out so it'll be hella hard to pick up now which kind of makes this review pointless but never mind! (Christian)

Anthrax

The Greater of Two Evils

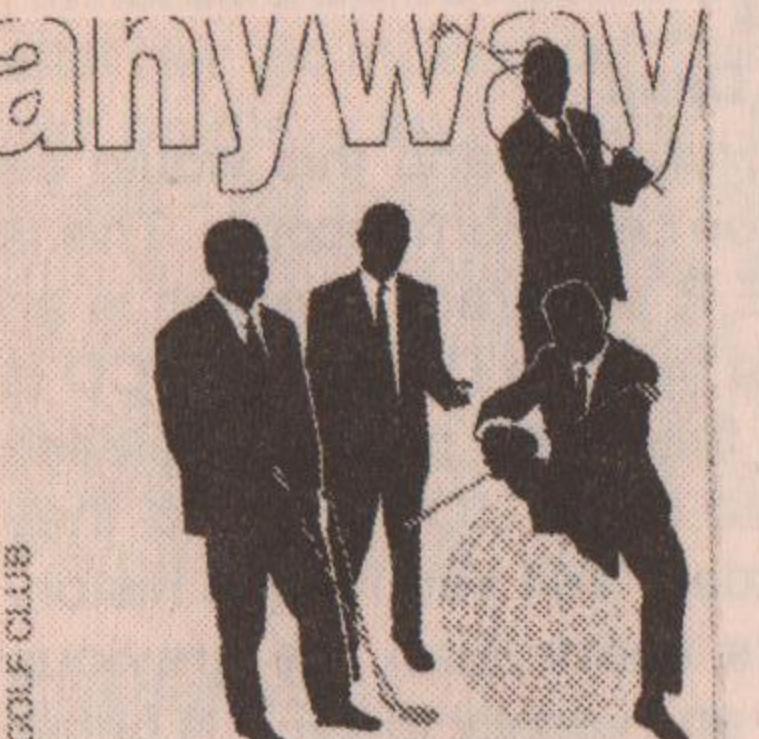
This is 14 old Anthrax songs from their first decade or so re-recorded. As my knowledge is limited to listening to 'Fistful of Metal' in a friend's car I can't really comment much on this release. However, I don't think this matters too much as you already know what Anthrax are like (though I can only imagine the completist going for this). (Christian) Nuclear Blast



<209>

Trigger

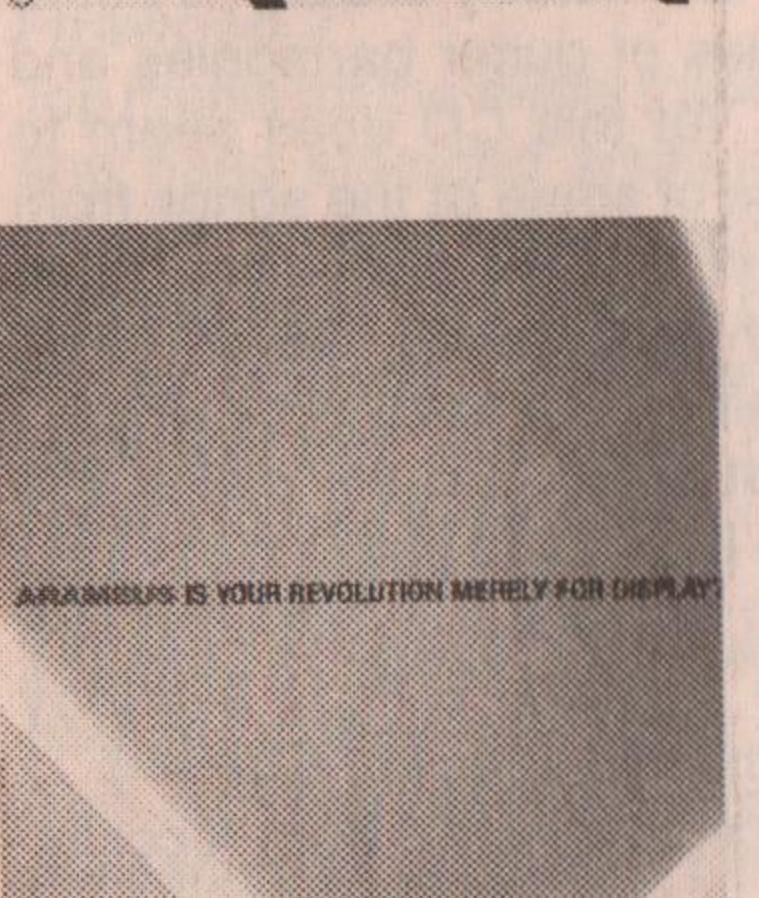
I wonder if some form of oracle is inhabiting my iTunes for it thought this CD was in fact a Boyzone single from 1999. I remember seeing <209> a few years ago at Uxbridge and they were crap then, so no surprise that they're crap now. There is no room left in this world for nu-metal. <209> need to realise that rap and metal don't mix and having <209> surrounding their name isn't cool, trendy, funky, or whatever else it could be conceived as being. It's mean to say this but I think this band should just stop right now and give up. The world doesn't deserve this, as a whole it's done nothing wrong. To inflict this on people is just plain wrong. There can be no excuse for anyone ever having to listen to this. (Geoff) Bohemian Records



Abe Froman

S/t (?)

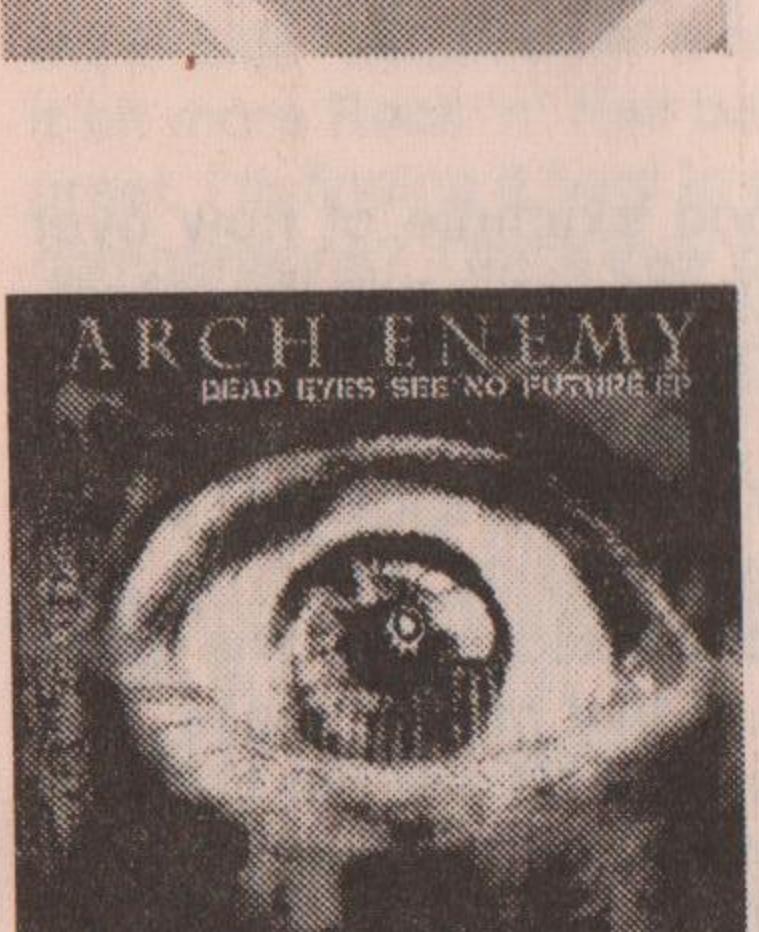
I kind of got the impression that this record got written as quickly as possible so the band could get back to the important job of playing gigs. People tend to think that this is a bad thing, but I really enjoyed this, there was a certain purity in the simplicity, and general messiness of this record. Punk rock. (edd) Plan-It-X Records



All About Adam (AAA)

S/t

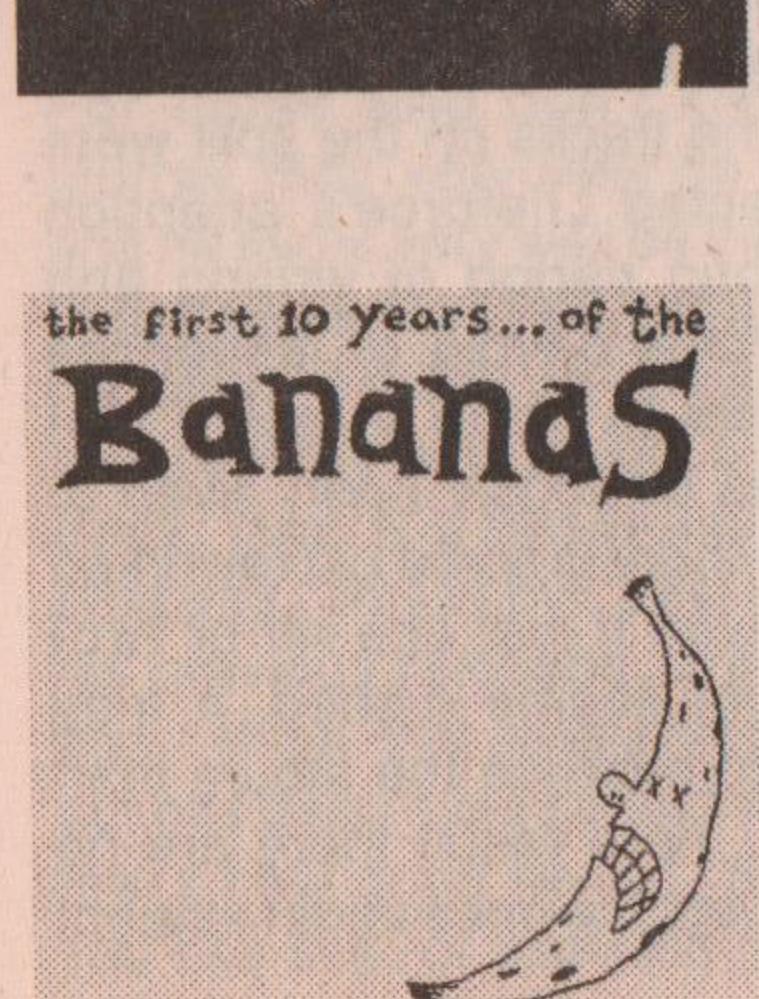
This is pretty good UK pop-punk, in the style of Snuff or Consumed. It isn't the most amazingly original thing, but it's not bad. I think they're pretty knew so hopefully they'll develop their sound more, and then I think they'll be something pretty special! (edd) All Gone Wrong Records



All Shall Perish

Hate.Perish.Revenge

Firstly, to get this out the way before starting the review proper, I have always enjoyed bands with unnecessarily violent band names. Like bands such as Heaven Shall Burn a band with a violent name and violent music is for me the equivalent of framing artwork. A band called fluffy bunnies that plays death metal could either be incredibly pretentious or incredibly misguided. All Shall Perish have that lovely posturing that is macho in response to the music, not the band members' egos. That rather long-winded introduction isn't just a rant and I hope will make what I'm going to say next quite obvious. I am enjoying this band greatly. Their music is heavy and intricate in a way many death metal obsessed hardcore bands have tried to create but without any of the stupid attempts at adding melody. Whilst not the most original band they play music that is at once exciting and engaging with plenty of their own flare and interpretation added to what is essential a tried and tested death metal style. From posturing to music this band really has me sated. (Geoff) Nuclear Blast



Among The Missing / Red Stars Parade

Split 7"

Top marks for really beautiful artwork and packaging. Very rad, as is the music on here. Among The Missing (and they're probably getting bored of this reference now) are another of Tim Ex-Son The Darkness' bands. They play doomy, metal with a lot of screaming and a lot of bass. They're so awesome that their song can be listened on both 33 and 45rpm (though unsurprisingly they don't sound very doomy at 45rpm!). This was the first time that I'd come across Red Stars Parade but they are all the same top bannana. Again play quite dark metal, with the addition of a really amazing drummer. A highly recommended 7". (edd)

Bananas

The First 10 Years...Of The

Bananas are a band whose repertoire consists of short feel good punky songs characterised by a general lack in musical talent. I'm not being harsh, it's just the case that this band is incredibly untalented and that in itself lends itself a particular charm. More than being an uncoordinated racket they have spunk and energy and are just interesting if for that to listen to. I'm not gonna sit here and pretend that this anarchic approach to music is in

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any case redefining music but I will say that this is a one off where bad music finds itself at once listenable and enjoyable. (Geoff) Plan-It-X Records

Bars

Introducing...

Holy shit, this album in INCREDIBLE. The front cover with MC5 style logo & black & white shots of instruments (no pretty boy photos here!) tells me this is a homage to rock 'n' roll & damn it rocks. The little I know about this band is that it's some of the guys from The Hope Conspiracy (I think the singer Kevin) & no doubt other influential hardcore bands. This is pissed off hardcore with a huge r 'n' r influence which seems to be getting really popular right now... I'm not complaining too much cos you can actually dance to it compared to something like The Locust. Where the Hope Conspiracy enjoy publicly exorcising their demons, Bars scream out "Just wanted to point out you're full of shit". It still has a personal edge & is as scathing as ever. The vocals sound kinda different, screamly but more high pitched, the riffs are killer... an essential dance floor filler (if kids actually danced instead of standing with their arms crossed looking moody)! Bars are coming over to the UK next year, so make sure you get this album, learn the words, get your dancing shoes on & see em live. (Joe Vs)

EVR

Behemoth Demigod

I got very excited when I first saw this album but it was unfounded and I soon realised that this was not a new album by Demigod. I really, really wish it was to be honest. After the last string of, quite frankly appalling, releases on Regain Records I had thought that they had finally made a pragmatic decision. To be honest though this isn't all that bad as far as overblown metal is concerned and this is the best release on Regain that comes to mind whilst I'm writing this. However Behemoth suffer greatly in that their music is incredibly boring. The soloing is uninspired, the lead virtually nonexistent (and where present woefully contrived), the vocals a simple generic grunt (which can suit spectacular music but can't carry a song on its own), and the rest of this album is nothing more than a simplistic thrash the likes of which has been put out by many bands over the years. I'm not thrilled by this record, I'm sure you can tell, but it is really not all that bad - I'm just very picky. (Geoff)

Regain Records

Before Today

A celebration of an ending

This is basically fast pop punk with screaming thrown in so they can call it post hardcore. They use a keyboard as well so they can claim to be original which is utter bollocks. I've heard this style too much and done better as well. (tom q)

Equal vision records

Billy Talent

S/t

I was always pretty sceptical about this band until a friend badgered me into acquiring it. I had this built up assumption of a bunch of guys spending too much time singing about their high school girl friends who dumped them on prom night, to a point I was right. But on another point I was unaware that the majority of the songs would be so beautifully woven. The guitar job is really something; the riff on "this is how it goes" is sooooo effective. Even

though I don't really like the whole emotional lyric thing the singer's voice is really good and the dual vocal parts and vocal changes make up for the lyrical content. I have been listening to this a fair bit and it has really grown on me. Blahblah. Late, tired. Blah. Blah...bed... "zzzzzzzzzz". (Darren)

www.billytalent.com / Atlantic records.

The Black Maria

Lead Us To Reason

More bad pseudo metal/hardcore/whatever. I don't want to devote time to this band. I don't think I should have too. The vocals are just plain annoying (backing vocals especially) and the music is nothing to shout about. I suppose it's fairer to say that this band just isn't my thing rather than laying into them like I usually do. However I can't let music this bad go without reprimand. In suppose I could easily be described as a musical elitist but the thing is I know what I like and what I don't and this sort of music is abhorrent to my definition of good music. It's not a far cry from the awful nu-metal that so perforated the airwaves a few years ago. Its whiney in a misguided attempt at conveying emotion yet at the same time it's emotionally void. The music itself is sterile and offers no relief. Ultimately this record can't be described in any nice way so I'm going to leave it at this. (Geoff)

Victory Records

The Blank Fight

House band feud

These guys started their because they all lived together and all realised that they could play the instruments they needed (including the harmonica). Which is all very punk rock. The only problem is that they're really horribly generic. I mean sure I'm still listening to them cause any band that sings about bikes and punks is cool, but still I hope they work on making themselves ever so slightly less generic! (edd)

Plan-It-X Records

The Blueprint

Phenomenology

I'm looking forward to the day The Blueprint stop promoting themselves on the ticket of being ex-earthtone9/pitchshifter/etc. They are nothing like any of those bands. Even compared to Pitchshifter they are dry and turgid. Earthtone9 was a fantastic band and I would be happier if The Blueprint would just openly emulate them. Instead we have a band that is obviously seeking its own style but is failing miserably. They're reusing the elements from their previous bands and mashing them together in an unhappy union. What would've impressed itself upon me as a dynamic and progressive hardcore band is reduced to a non-event due to the existence of the band member's previous bands. It's time The Blueprint stop resting on their unearned (in their current state) laurels and actually do something worth of praise or find new vistas for music talent that is there, despite what impression I may have given here I'm only frustrated by the unfulfilled potential. (Geoff)

Gold Records

Bohica

No Apologies

This band are very hard to review. Not for any good reason just that I've been told by Edd to rewrite any reviews where I've been too mean. It's hard to be nice to this band so maybe I'll just describe them. They've kinda missed to boat for this sort of music. Think of Fony or any other of the bands on Copro/Casket and

you'll know just what this band are like. It's got a tedious mid-tempo bouncy structure to every song and if this was 2000 I'd be calling this nu-metal but now I'm tempted to dismiss it as metal altogether and clump it together with bands like The Rasmus in the whole-manufactured-pop-with-the-band-actually-playing-their-own-instruments category. Believe it or not this review is actually much much nicer than the previous three drafts. (Geoff)

Can't find reference to a record label and it came with no press release.

Brahman

A Forlorn Hope

This got put on whilst I was making food, and it kind of slipped into the background. Forgetting what had been put on I wondered what I was doing listening to SoCal-esque pop-punk with incomprehensible lyrics. I was even more confused when I saw it was a Revelation Records CD. So apparently these guys are huge in Japan, having sold 500,000 copies, playing a 'unique style of rock/ hardcore/ pop/ emo'. Personally I thought they sound like a fairly generic late nineties pop-punk band like Lagwagon or 'shudder' Gob. If you like them then you'll probably like this, but I really didn't enjoy this much. (edd)

Revelation Records

Bridge to Solace

Kingdom of the Dead

Metal core from Hungary, and this would be their new release on Let it Burn records. This is only a five track E.P, one track of which is an intro which is sung by Nora Ducza. This CD is a bit more metal than their previous release "Of Bitterness and Hope" (OBAH) and they have also rerecorded "Will you rewrite history with me" which is better than the previous version. Musically and vocally this E.P is better with great examples of guitar harmonies and lead guitar skills. Yet this CD does seem to lack the catchiness of some of the songs from "OBAH". I also feel that the production is nowhere near as tech as it was on "OBAH" (e.g.; first one and a half min of track two) which I think is a slight let down, but the mix is still amazing and much production points to the intro and last drum beat on track five, amazing use of reverb. This is a gnarly E.P by a gnarly band and well worth hunting down. (Darren)

www.bridgetosolace.com / Let it Burn records

By Night

Burn The Flags

This is a very good example of how over producing an album can really ruin the record. By Night have gone from under produced to over produced in one quick step and have suffered greatly for it. They've lost any power their music had by releasing this crisp and sterile piece, treble orientated record. The songs have no presence, if that makes sense, and normally I would just get on with life but I am generally disappointed. Further more there is a distinct change for the worse in the music writing since the split with Cipher System. I'm curious to know if the tracks on the split were the ones that attracted Lifeforce's attention and represent a long period of writing and tinkering (and perhaps devoid of influences from the record label to make a record that would sell) than has obviously been given to this record. I'm sure there is some old reworked material on here (even if just one riff or two) but the whole album seems rushed, it may have taken longer to produce the album than write and record it. As a result there are no stand out tracks (except the ones taken straight

from the split ep, although the new production ruins them) and I'm really wondering what the point in listening to this record is. I know that there is some emphasis and momentum surrounding a full length soon after you've been signed to a label but in this case I wish By Night had held off a little longer so that they might have released something truly spectacular rather than what I must conclude is decidedly mediocre. (Geoff)

Lifeforce Records

Carrie Nations

Be Still

At the end of the nineteenth century there was a pretty cool woman called Carrie Nation. She went around the saloons in her area and destroying the bars that were in them. She didn't like what alcohol was doing to her community, or the fact that it made people like her husband abusive to women. It's just a shame the US Federal government and the Christians got the wrong end of the stick about what women like Carrie Nation were saying. This is a completely pointless story, because I'm not sure Carrie Nations are named after her. So moving on! These guys get points - and I mean MAJOR points - for making their inlay card into a comic book. They also get points for playing good music. Subdued punk rock, with a lot of analogue mess. It's good. (edd)

Plan-It-X Records

Colonel Bastard/Colonel Mustard

All Men Are Bastards

This packaging is kind of confusing, so I'm not entirely sure whether or not this is a split between two bands or just one band. Anyway, there was a cool little note on the inside cover explaining how the label 'No Mates Records' prefer to do cheap releases and then do hundreds of CDRs and photocopied inlays just to get the records heard. Can't argue with that kind of logic if you can't find anyone to put out your record. Anyway, I've known some of these guys for years, so my opinion is kinda clouded. It's really quirky ska influenced electronic (?) music. I'm finding it really strange to listen to, but for some reason it's really growing on me! (12-o-5)

No Mates Records

Charlottfield

Firewood 7"

Top marks for the sweet tracing paper and hand stamped artwork! More artwork should feature small girls walking dogs and teasing cats with pieces of string! Right back to the important stuff...the music. I've been waiting to hear these guys for a LONG time, since someone told me they sounded like Botch, well they don't & obviously they will suffer for this!

This is really repetitive, the A-Side "Firewood" is just weak & pretty short,

the B-Side "Loudmouth" is better and it bit more Rock 'n' Roll but still not great. I'm finding it hard to draw any comparisons? I think they'd be great

live in some sweaty shit hole of a venue in their native Brighton...but in my modestly furnished one bedroom flat I share with my girlfriend in Southsea, they sound pretty dull. (Joe Vs)

Jonson Family Records

Chris Murray

One Everything

For those who don't know Chris Murray may very well be a genius and he might very well be the greatest thing happening in ska at the moment. He plays a beat up acoustic guitar and records everything onto a four track, and it's absolutely fucking amazing. This is the 'best of...' of all his previous releases, which means that I think that everything he's put out has been mixed onto this CD (yup that's how good he is!). Seriously if you like ska, or acoustic music pick

this up! (edd)

Moon Ska Europe

Circus Act

No History, No Consequences

Circus Act is in a sense pop-punk. They are however very unconventional in a way that can only be truly understood by listening to their records. There is a definite sense of movement, be it discord or a general sense against inertia, which is imbued in their music. This makes it the least interesting to listen to.

The music is simple enough but for the reason just mentioned it's surprisingly engaging and entertaining, and whilst I realise that I won't return to this album on any frequent basis it is still providing me with enjoyment in this moment now, rather than utter disgust as is usually evoked in me by pop-punk. In no way is satisfying me the benchmark for music achievement but I do feel that this band have found a pleasant sound. This sound however is not amazing. I would be lying if I described this band in a way that portrayed them in a way they are not. They are enjoyable as providers of the light and frivolous but only as that. (Geoff)

Lifeforce Records

interesting and has really hit upon something special. The blend of very different types of metal has really pulled off and they've created a sound that is not only unique but one that other bands will find hard to emulate and copy. (Geoff)

Nuclear Blast

Cipher System

Central Tunnel 8

These guys are proficient in what they do, but to be brutally honest I just can't get their influences out of my head. I can't listen to this without wanting to put either Soilwork or In Flames on the CD player. The band are pretty good at what they do, it's just there are others who do it a lot better. (edd)

Lifeforce Records

Cursed

Hell Comes Home 7"

Second release from the 'new' Chris Colohan band. I know a lot of people are slightly disappointed by this 7" but I think it's decent. The A-side is a good anti-war and the b-side, a Stooges cover, better than I expected though obviously not as good as the original. They are over on our shores in February so you can see 'em live soon! (Christian)

Hex

Dave House

Kingston's Current

I really hate ending up reviewing records that are clearly good, but that I'm not into. This - as you might have already guessed - is one of those CDs. Dave House plays acoustic rock music with intensely personally lyrics. It's the kind of thing that I can imagine a lot of people enjoying, but it's just not my kettle of fish. (edd)

Gravity Records,
gravitydiprecords.com

Dark Tranquillity

Lost To Apathy EP

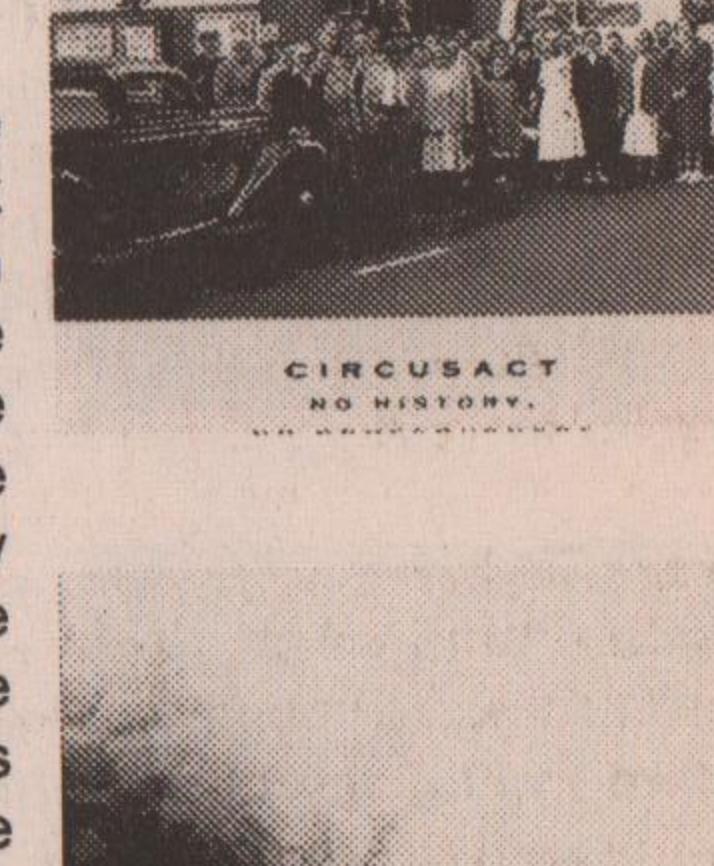
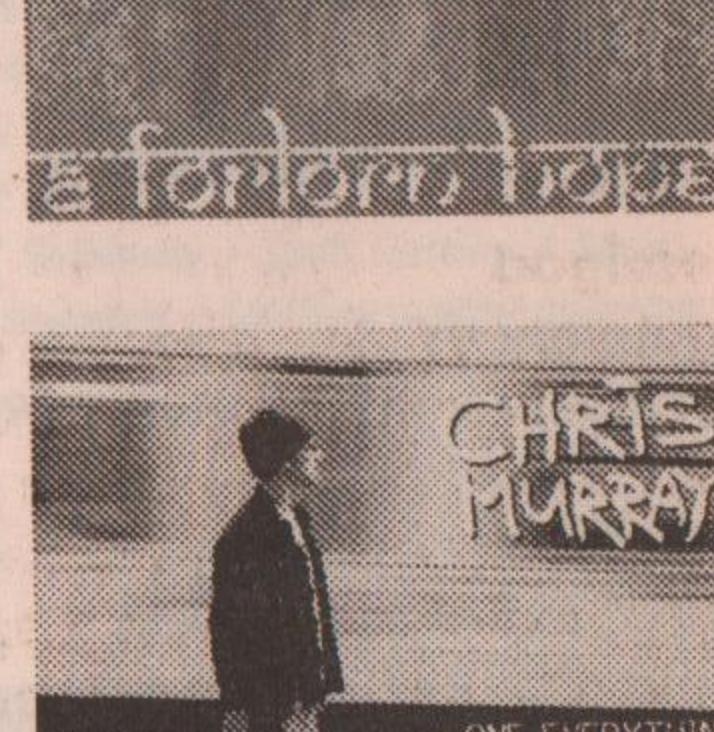
I have at various points in my life been unhealthily obsessed with Dark Tranquillity. This I blame wholly on the album The Gallery which must be one of the finest records to ever come out of Gothenburg. The retrospective/live album released by Century in mid-04 did much to rekindle my love of this band. However The Gallery is one of their earlier albums and some of their later releases like Damage Done had done much to dismay and upset me. Lost To Apathy unfortunately has too much in common with Damage Done for me to refer to it as spectacular but there is more of the technical element that made their earlier stuff so alluring and this is a much welcomed effort from one of the bands that first interested me along death metal lines. (Geoff)

Century Media

The Dauntless Elite

Security 10"

From the ashes of Fig 4.0 & Joe 90 comes the dauntless Elite, saviours of the UK DIY scene! The Elite are



Record Reviews

one of few bands who can effectively mix melody with spite, every song on this amazingly coloured piece of wax is an anthem, mixing up influences from members previous bands along with the likes of Kid Dynamite, Avail and some all out pop! Lee & Joe are without a doubt two of the best writers around, so mixing them together results in genius lyrics dealing with politics & personal issues. It's nice to hear a band unafraid to mix up all of their influences to create something spectacular. I'm sure they will go on to bigger things! (Joe Vs) Somebody's Song

Dead To Fall

Villainy and virtue

I hate this CD. This is just shit metal that they try to pass off as hardcore. Every song is too long and boring and at the end of every track there is a generic beatdown, which I'm sure kids will be fighting invisible ninjas in their bedrooms to. This will appeal to fans of Atreyu and As I Lay Dying. (tom q)

Victory records

Dead Stop

Done With You

Depending on whether you like Ten Yard Fight-style of Old School or not you'll either see this as being, 'not another fucking old school record, are people not bored of this yet?', or 'awesome, another rad record'. Intelligent people will find themselves falling headfirst into the latter category. These guys might not be the most original band in the whole world, but you can't really go wrong with this style of music, and any band that covers 'Seen Red' in their set is OK by me! (edd)

(distributed by) Reflections Records

Defiance, Ohio / Ghost Mice Split CD

I got totally lost in the inlay sheet for this. There's something really refreshing about it just being an A4 page with pretty much exclusively hand written notes. It's rad. As is the music. There's a Ghost Mice review elsewhere, which should (I hope) cover what they sound like. Defiance, Ohio are slightly more traditionally 'punk' sounding, and kind of remind me of Against Me! Both bands are cool, and both sing cool lyrics. This is cheap to buy too. Punk!!! (edd)

Plan-It-X Records

Don't Look Down

The Fear In Love

I got this band's EP to review almost two years ago now. And well they were shit then, and they're *ahem* pretty much as bad now. Boring, bland, lifeless emo pop with dull artwork. (edd)

Nitro

The Doits

This Is Rocket Science

The Doits are a talented bunch of musicians playing poppy-punk indie that fails to interest me in the slightest. The Doits lack the driving force and speed that I crave from

metal and hardcore and fails to provide stunning guitar work which has lead me to classic 70s guitar legends. Inoffensive music of this ilk has little to offer me. The essence of the guitars is a light and airy style that refrains from a full out lead style sticking mainly to delicate lead riffs, intros and outros. The vocals are rough and unrefined such as is the trend in indie – conveying passion is always easier when the vocals are just shy of perfect where oddities can be induced. Plenty of people will like this record and I don't blame them. There are plenty of good things here but for me it's not what I'm looking for in music and as a result I don't get too much out of it. (Geoff)

Wild Kingdom

Domino Effect / Kick it Till it Breaks split CD?

Ok... I think this is like a split demo/live recording, but all I got was a cdr with the stuff written on it, and it wasn't too clear, sorry if I fucked it up! The first thing that hits you on the first song is the mixing is terrible, the guitars are nearly lost in the wall of fuzz, yet, somehow, the song writing really shines through... both bands are doing the fast paced, melodic thing which I for one am a big fan of. The vocals are gruff, but suit the music well, and its early days yet, but if you're a fan of the likes of rise against, kid dynamite etc etc, check out these guys when they play near you, they're pretty good. (Mikey D)

Draw Blood

The Calm Before the Storm

OK so granted I have only reviewed like six records for this issue of RN, but so far everyone has been fucking great, and this one's no exception. When I first put it on I just kinda thought, 'Yeah this isn't bad but it's fairly standard metalcore. Oh well at least it'll make for an easy review'. So I review it, and then discover that I've spent the whole afternoon rocking out to this album and am gonna have to rewrite it cause I've worked out it's much more than just 'fairly standard metalcore'. First, it actually has lyrics which mean something, rather than your atypical 'I got dumped, and now I'm bitter, cause I'm a spoilt twenty year old who never really matured beyond the age of thirteen'. Secondly the music is engrossing. See it fools you into believing that it's just standard and then you're trapped, and there's absolutely no fucking escape. And to top it all off it has really rad artwork – even if on first spying the front cover you think it's something that Victory put out. (edd)

(distributed by) Reflections Records

Defiance, Ohio / Ghost Mice

Split CD

I got totally lost in the inlay sheet for this. There's something really refreshing about it just being an A4 page with pretty much exclusively hand written notes. It's rad. As is the music. There's a Ghost Mice review elsewhere, which should (I hope) cover what they sound like. Defiance, Ohio are slightly more traditionally 'punk' sounding, and kind of remind me of Against Me! Both bands are cool, and both sing cool lyrics. This is cheap to buy too. Punk!!! (edd)

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Nitro

The Doits

Moments Erased EP

Terrible, terrible, terrible name, and pretty terrible artwork made me think I was going to hate this. Thankfully it's not as bad I feared it would be. It's an odd mix of Bob Dylan meets punk rock. I'm not sure I'm wholly

sold on it, but it's pretty interesting, though in all honesty it did just make me want to listen to 'Hurricane'. (edd)

dudeonmission.co.uk

Elemae

A life to be defined

Another day another Engineer "emo" release with sunsets on the cover! I prefer this to the Joshua CD maybe because it reminds of a less heavy Farside, I think these guys are from New Jersey so I can't go off on one about how the singer sings in an American accent! I think my Dad would probably like this? Is that kinda Counting Crows Dad rock feel to them, if they played the Isle of Wight festival I'm sure they'd sell a shit load of records along side Starsailor & Stereophonics. Once again not bad, but not what I need in my life right now... sorry! (Joe Vs)

Engineer Records

El Hombre Trajeado

Shlap

El Hombre Trajeado is one of those bands with a definite style that really is theirs and no one else's. Not relying on vocals too much, the bands central theme comes from the unique, awkward guitar that gives the band's flare and flavour. This band is impossible to describe. I've sat here and written (and then deleted) sentence after sentence trying to find a way to describe this band's sound. There is no point of reference to more well known bands that I could state nor is there really anyway of describing the sound of the band. They're energetic without being frantic, dynamic and fun. It's an inoffensive record that doesn't grate but at the same time has something of an edge other bands commonly lack. I really like this release. It's kooky, bizarre and ultimately unique. I recommend hunting them down and giving them a listen. I'm pleased; I would hope you would be too. (Geoff)

Lost Dog Recordings

Enthroned

XES Haereticum

Hmm... black metal here, and not too shabby really. The vocals certainly wound me up the first time I heard this, but I slowly got into it, and although my knowledge of Black Metal is basically Satyricon and Emperor, this certainly has its moments. The drum fills are RIDICULOUS, but none the less most enjoyable, and there were some decent melodic guitar parts. Nothing world changing, but I certainly enjoyed listening to it. (Mikey D)

Napalm Records

Eternal Oath

Wither

Eternal Oath are one of those bands that I can imagine attracting a strong devoted core of follower but beyond which they will have trouble attracting fans. For you see Eternal Oath play a strange mixture of Goth and Death metal which works in places and doesn't in others. The problem with them is they can no longer be



Three years in the making, *Recipes for Disaster: an anarchist cookbook* is the long-awaited follow-up to our first book, *Days of War, Nights of Love*. This 624-page manual complements the romance and idealism of that earlier work with practical information and instruction illustrated with extensive technical diagrams and first-hand accounts, and prefaced with a thorough discussion of the diverse roles direct action can play in social transformation. If you're looking for a tactical handbook for revolutionary action, look no further.

Over thirty collectives collaborated in testing, composing, and editing the book's 62 sections: *Affinity Groups / Antifascist Action / Asphalt Mosaics / Banner Drops Hoists / Behavioral Cut-ups / Bicycle Collectives / Bicycle Parades / Painting by Bicycle / Billboard Improvement / Blocs, Black and Otherwise / Blockades and Lockdowns / Classroom Takeover / Coalition Building / Collectives / Corporate Downsizing / Distribution, Tabling, and Infoshops / Dumpster Diving / Effigies / Evasion / Festivals / Food Not Bombs / Graffiti / Guerrilla Performances / Health Care / Hijacking Events / Hitchhiking / Infiltration / Inflatables / Legal Support / Marches and Parades / Independent & Mainstream Media / Mental Health / Musical Instruments / Newspaper Wraps / Parties / Pie Throwing / Portrait Exchange / Reclaim the Streets / Sabotage / Screenprinting / Security Culture / Sex / Shoplifting / Smoke Bombs / Solidarity / Spell Casting / Squatting / Stenciling / Stickering / Supporting Survivors of Domestic Violence / Surviving a Felony Trial / Thinktanks / Torches / Undermining Oppression / Unemployment / Utilities / Wheatpasting*

\$12 ppd in the U.S. from: CrimethInc. / PO Box 1963 / Olympia WA 98507, for more info and international rates, see www.crimethinc.com

Christmas Under Cover

A 16 track compilation CD as a benefit for the Shelter charity. Comes in a snazzy A5 booklet, with a page of art from each band:

Meets Guitar; Holiday Stabbings; Annalise; Pixel! Pixel! Pixel!; Andy, Glenn and Ritch; Trencher; Rydell; Billy Mahonie; Send More Paramedics; 3Dbs Down; Joshua; Little Explorer; Cracked Pavement Curse; Judah Johnson; Annie Quick and Jet Johnson.

Includes 7 previously unreleased tracks. ALL profits go to the Shelter charity. Just £4.50ppd / £4 in shops or at gigs.

Itch - Well, well, well, three holes in the ground LP

Itch's debut album! This four piece from Leeds play immensely good Spy Vs Spy-esque intricate indie rock; brimming with ideas, passion and fervour.

On lovely white vinyl. The CD version is being done by Big Scary Monsters (www.bsmrocks.com).

Available mid-February: £6.00ppd or £5 from shops or at gigs. Two-week UK tour throughout February: check www.thebanditch.co.uk for more details.

STILL SMOKING HOT

Candy Sniper 'Low Art' CD - 11 tracks of intense, twisting, beautiful Appleseed-Cash-esque indie. On transparent blue vinyl in sexy handmade card sleeves. £2.50ppd

Snapshot Around The Moon - 5/s/t 2" + 2 tracks of alternative rock, blues, pictures and a super-huge thermo packed with punk rock and alternative records and CDs. If you're a label / distro / fanzine / shop type person, then do get in touch for trade and shanzuise. Oh, and please make cheques out to Jon Wood, or you can paypal the address below.

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Record Reviews



described as either death or gothic and fans from both camps will be disappointed by their straying away from the more conventional centre. I know this seems strange coming from me who praises originality above all and deplores sticking to tried and tested sounds. However Eternal Oath have tried to force a union, which, if it doesn't come naturally, it doesn't come at all, and has destroyed the merits either genre has. I have been enjoying the records Black Lodge have put out this time around so this is a particular disappointment and try as I might I really can't find myself enjoying this band. (Geoff) Black Lodge

Fear Before The March Of Flames
Art Damage
Actually playing that style of discordant metallic hardcore that's existence is almost solely thanks to bands like Botch and Converge I suddenly thought I would have something great to listen to over the next coming weeks. But, and there's always a but for me, they've fussed around with clean/spoken vocals on the first couple of songs and it's ruined the momentum of this album. I really could cry. I suppose I shouldn't be angry for them having clean vocals here and there, every other band seems to feel the need, but I really was starting to like this album and then suddenly there are all these little snippets of bad, only seconds in length but long enough to completely put me of the songs their in. Oh well, this is a good release for a band that caught me by surprise but due to my overly anal pedantic self I can't be happy with this record and in my books it's going to have to remain a really good attempt that just missed the mark. (Geoff) Equal Vision

Fifty on Red
7"
Out of the 3 D&G December releases, this was probably the one I was most excited about, and Leicester's FOR have definitely stepped it up. RN columnist PetexBust's vocals have improved indescribably from the demo's kinda chatty shouts into this chesty punch of a grunt that would scare off burglars. Listening to this record, it's clear to see the band members' stereos have been chockfull of the latest US hardcore, like Think I Care, Internal Affairs etc. Basically, FOR have kept the Carry On-esque pace of the demo but really given it a much Harder sound and added a couple of Floopunch style mosh parts too. Pretty indicative of the change between the two releases is "Say Goodbye", which is basically "Apathetic" off the demo re-written and improved so greatly that its barely recognisable. I noticed though, cos I'm a geek. Admittedly, this record has a bit of filler, and at times the tracks kinda mould into one another, but this band displays real potential and live they fuckin bring it. And it fades out with a mosh part that ranks alongside Internal Affairs for tearin' up ability. (Geoff) Season Of Myst

Esoteric
Subconscious Dissolution Into The Continuum

For me Esoteric are now one of the leading lights of Doom and one of the few bands that I would consider essential listening in this genre. Metamorphogenesis was a seminal release for this band but Subconscious Dissolution Into The Continuum takes them much further. Rather than adopting a similar opening bludgeon that we saw on their previous album Esoteric begin with a delicate, almost dainty, airy riff that is as unnerving as it is enchanting that descends into that familiar torpor that we have come to love and expect and which Esoteric has consistently and uncompromisingly produced.

This album has as all the excruciating experience of the previous three albums; it's menacing, vicious, dark and tragic whilst at the same time it's the most beautiful and sophisticated album from yet. With this album Esoteric not only live up to their name but are one of those few bands that have the gall to push forward and redefine their entire genre. Subconscious Dissolution Into The Continuum is a benchmark in Doom with Esoteric once again raising the bar. (Geoff) Season Of Myst

The Extinction of Mankind
The Nightmare Seconds...

No surprises after looking at the name, cover and label you decide what this sounds like. Yup politicised crusty punk rock. It's very good too. Not really a whole lot to say, not the single most original band in the world, but good at what they do, and I enjoyed listening to this 12". (edd) Profane Existence, Po Box 8722, MN 55408, USA or CD on Xtinction Records

Face the Enemy
Shot Dead For Small Change
For some reason I always find it really difficult to review hardcore CDs and do them justice. Commentary always gets really repetitive! This is a really cool E.P. with all the trademarks of fast, angry and rhythmical British hardcore. It's 'traditional' without being cliché and the intro to the first track is amazing! (12-o-5)

Floor
Dove

I was so excited when I heard Floor were putting out a new album & even happier when I was given a promo of it! Well, it turns out this isn't so much new but the "lost" album recorded in 1994 but never released & in a sense I wish it'd remained lost! What attracted me to the first Floor release was the sheer mind crunching heaviness mixed with incredible melodic vocals, Dove barely hints at the great things to come. The front sticker describes this as a mixture of the Melvins (right on! I can see that one) & Joy Division? What the fuck? This is a god damn lie, don't believe it. I guess this is just okay, if you loved the first Floor album prepare to be disappointed! (Joe Vs) No Idea Records

Four Dumb Kids
Life In A Northern Town
I think these guys might be misrepresenting themselves with their name. Their lyrics don't seem dumb to me. Likewise the music is far from dumb, even if it is slightly generic melodic punk. All the same its entirely enjoyable (ohh alliteration). (edd) The Anatomical Heart, 4 Chapelfield Way, S61 2TL

Fun
Szklaraka Poreba LP
They say you should never judge a book by its cover, but when you've got near 100 records that you have to sort through and work out who reviews what, there's a tendency to horde what looks good (and then distribute it evenly between all the reviews). Ha! You thought you all got me to confess there didn't you? Regardless Fun was one of the bands that I kept for myself. The artwork is interesting but simple, unlike their music which is awesome and complex. Lots of staccato riffs, and layers of sound, which makes for an awesome DIY hardcore record. (edd) If Society

Garmonbozia
S/t
These guys are crust and punk as fuck. They've got (the expected?) string instruments and operatic elements, as well as intensely politicized lyrics. They're really good. My only complaint is I wish they were more explanations to the lyrics, you can learn more from a band with those than anything else. All the same two thumbs up! (edd) Profane Existence

GBH
Punk Junkies CD
Before we go any further I'd just like to publicly ask Edd to please get a reviewer with a good knowledge of street, '77 and Oi punk as I'm certainly not the best equipped to review records like this. Take this record for instance. I've never heard 'Leather', Bristles, Studs, and Acne' so I feel like I shouldn't be reviewing it. I didn't even know they were still going. Anyway this was recorded in 1996

and has just been released. If I'm being quite honest I was expecting this to be a bit poo, but I'm quite enjoying it. As I said I can't compare it to previous stuff, though I'm guessing it's slightly more metallic than previous stuff. I think I may pick up a copy of 'Leather...' 'cos this is quite decent, better than most of the stuff received at RN. (Christian) Captain Oil!

Gold Blade
Psycho CDs
Another record which I'm chronically underqualified to review. Err, I can't say much beyond I don't really like this. I can say unless you're a real fan it probably isn't worth picking up as it consists of one track all ready released, three lie tracks of less than good quality, and two covers of their songs by other band (!). It is recorded in Wolverhampton though. (Christian) Captain Oil!

Ghost Mice
The Debt of the Dead

I really like this record, but it took me a while to get into. Acoustic punk rock always takes me a while to get into. I guess I must just like bass or something. Anyhow, Ghost Mice are rad, I really like Chris's lyrics, and the fact it's all acoustic makes it feel really sincere, the inlay being hand written, cut 'n' paste, just adds to that. I like it. (edd) Plan-It-X Records, Po Box 3521, Bloomington, IN 47402

Ghostride
Cobrasunrise
Sad but true 9 times out of 10 you can tell if a bands good or bad from their front cover. The cover on this was cringe-worthy. I'll leave you to make your own decision about what I thought they sounded like. (edd) Plastic Head Records

Green Day
American Idiot

Woah, Green Day, this takes me back to being 12 and "doe" being the first album I ever brought. I didn't even know what punk was then, but the songs were catchy and there was a lot of swearing in them, so I thought they were really cool. Roll on 7-8 years and I still like punk, and Green Day still exist, rad. Ok, this really isn't much of a punk album (wise cracking political commentary included), but as a straight up, uplifting rock album this is really darn good. Billie Joe has always been an incredible songwriter, singer and lyricist and you could tell with "warning" he wanted to break away from the formula but didn't quite succeed. On this anything and everything is in the mix (including a couple of 8 minute songs, eeeep...) and for the most part it works, though it does start to lose my interest towards the end. Having said that this is about a billion times better than the shit parading as pop punk these days, and I'm much happier my little sister is listening to this rather than the likes of Good Charlotte and co. (Mikey D) Reprise Records

Glass Casket
We are gathered here today

Bands like this are always tough to review. Although amazingly good musicians, the very sad case is we already have the dillinger escape plan and converge and although the music on here is certainly not bad spazz at all, those 2 bands always do it better, meaning this is enjoyable, but if I really wanted to listen to stuff like this I'll just listen to "calculating infinity". (Mikey D) Bastardized Recordings

Hand To Hand
A Perfect Way to Say Goodbye

I thought Lifeforce Records swore off American bands a couple years ago? I guess they changed their mind. They probably shouldn't have done. I'm perhaps being over critical of this, but it's really grating on my nerves, I had to force myself - beyond better judgement - just to get through the first song. The worst is that these guys apparently have an ex-member of As Friends Rust. I'm trying to forget this fact so that I don't have a

tarnished opinion of his old band's back catalogue. This is just melodic-metal posturing. It's not quite as bad as Atreyu, but it's definitely heading in that direction! (edd) Lifeforce Records

Hard Skin
Same Meat Different Gravy
I tried to come up with a really insightful witty and clever review to warrant Household Name giving me this record to review but all I came up with was this: Any band that has a song who's chorus is 'copper, copper, cunt, cunt, cunt' is alright in my book, even if my PC side gets offended occasionally. I suggest you buy this album. (edd) Oil Soldname Records

The Haunted
rEVOLVER

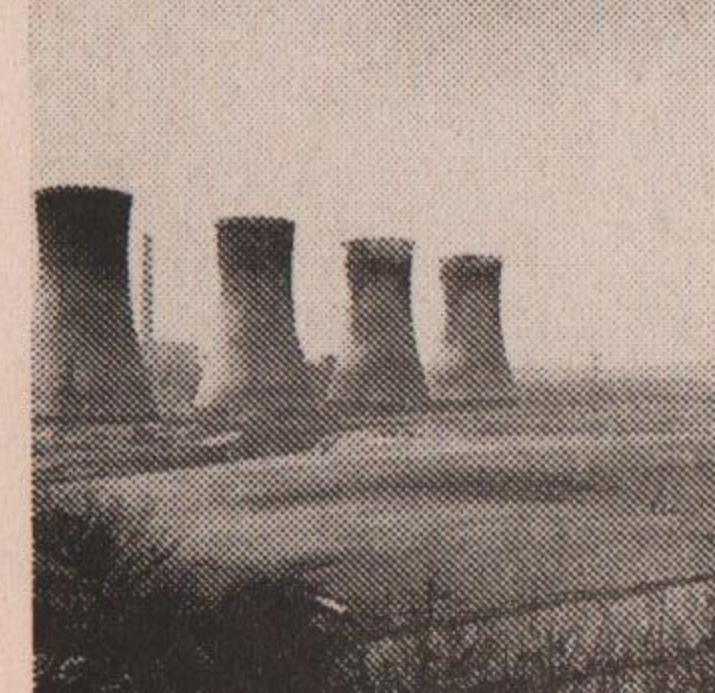
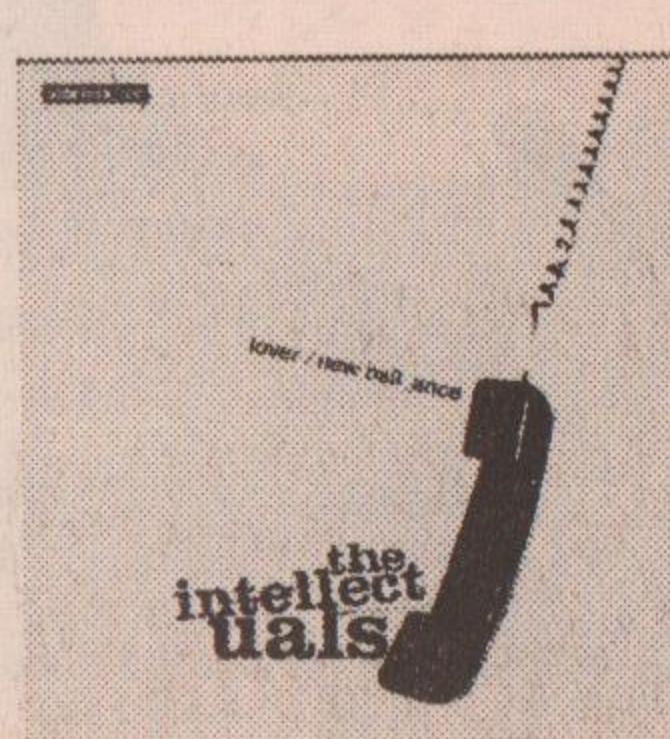
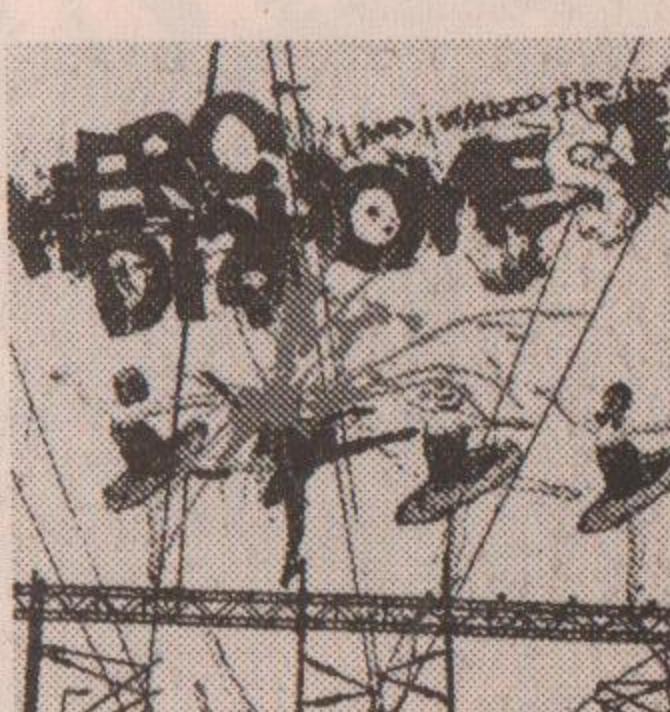
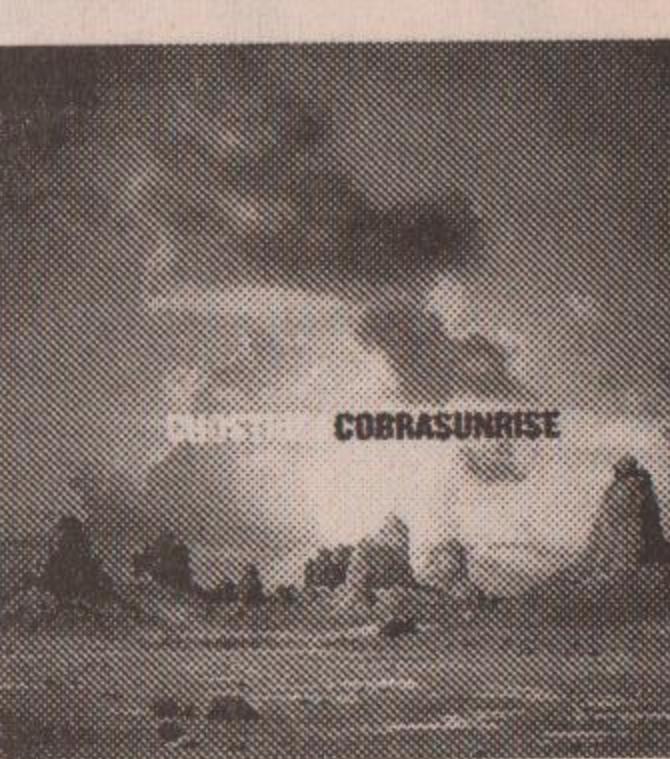
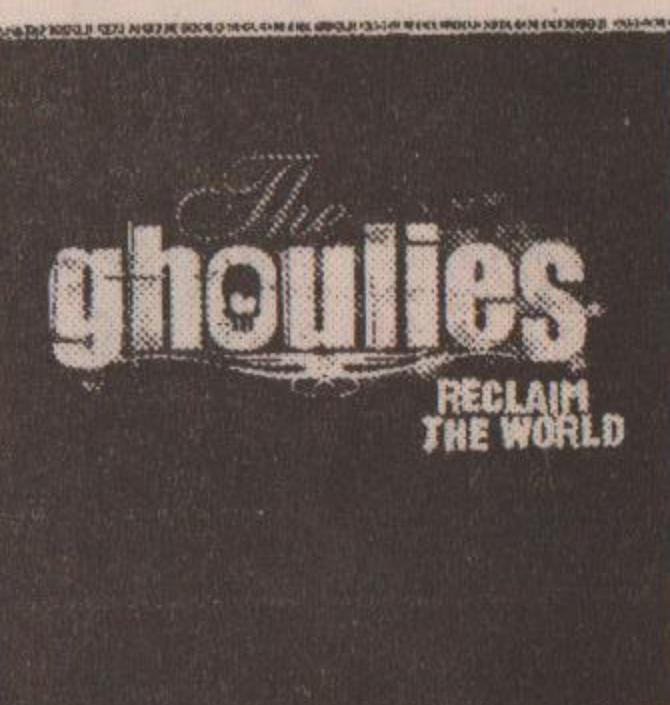
Yay! I was so chuffed when I found this in my review pile, as to put it bluntly, the Haunted are fucking awesome and I've been waiting with baited breath to hear what this album would be like. Two things really stand out on this. The first is the return of their original vocalist Peter Dolving, who rather than going for a typical metal gargoyle or scream, has far more of an intense hardcore style delivery, which brings a whole new level of intensity to the music. In fact, he has some of the most exciting vocals I've heard in a long time... the other thing is music wise things are a lot more stripped down and groove orientated, but with a few nice techy parts to keep things interesting. I think it works quite well and though very different to "one kill wonder" I certainly wouldn't say this is worse, just pretty different. Top stuff. (Mikey D) Century Media

Hero Dishonest
Your Poison Scream

I do enjoy Hero Dishonest - there's something wholesome and good about their music and it's enjoyable in the very least. There's no messing around with silly attempts at producing the next cutting edge Record that's going to revolutionise hardcore and punk. After all we can't all be Refused so it's nice to have a band still consistently producing solid hardcore and doing their own thing without pandering to the perception of good music or modern trends in an unsightly way. Although not the best thing I've heard from Hero Dishonest I'm certainly not going to be complaining for few of the records I've had to review recently have been any where as good as this. (Geoff) If Society

Hero Dishonest/Mukeka Di Rato
Split 7"

Anything released on 625 tends to fulfil two categories a) being thrash b) being good. Max 625 most also be complimented on his constant efforts to release music by bands from far flung corners of the globe. This 7" is a split with the Finnish label If Society. Mukeka Di Rato are from Brazil and play really good melodic thrash, with



Record Reviews

INTENT

the exception of the first track 'Burzum Marley', which as you can probably guess by the title, is a bizarre mix of black metal and reggae! Hero Dishonest from Finland offers up 3 rough tracks of good thrash and a cover of Joy Division's 'Warsaw' (though it isn't as good as the Swing Kid's version). A decent 7". (Christian) 625/If Society

Intent Double Positive

Ahh, late review. I only just remembered that this isn't part of my record collection yet, I've got to actually review it. As the album name suggests this is positive hardcore from the SouthCoast. Like most of the other music coming from the region it's awesome. (edd) Suspect Device

Jason Molina

Pyramid Electric Co. LP
Solo LP from Jason Molina of Songs: Ohia fame. I've recently been introduced to Songs: Ohia and they are truly excellent. However I was slightly disappointed by this. I prefer the more minimalistic Songs: Ohia LPs so was looking forward to this. Unfortunately in places this gets a little too minimalistic and my mind wanders. However if you're a fan of that whole alt-american/folk thing then I'm sure you'll like it. When you buy this on vinyl you also get the CD of the record thrown in as well which is a nice touch (and made getting Christmas presents easier!). (Christian) Secretly Canadian

The Jesus Years

Are Mathew, Mark, Luke and John I listened three times before I noticed there were no vocals, which I guess gives an indication of just how good the music of this band is. These guys play discordant, high pitched, punk rock (there's gotta be a catchier title than that somewhere lying around. Come on I need a pigeon hole goddamit!) for lack of a better description. I guess kind of like more recent Murder Of Rose Luxemburg stuff. (edd)

The Audacious Art Experiment, 27 Harold Road, Leeds, LS6 1PR

Jinn Vs Army Of Flying Robots Split 10"

Two really great bands. One really great 10" (not least cause of it's fancy colours!). Jinn play quite a straight forward metallic hardcore with gruff vocals, but more in-depth vocals than you normally get with that genre. The Army Of Flying Robots on the other side play fast, intense hardcore vaguely alluding to bands like Orchid, but with vocals that can actually (just about) be understood! Definitely worth picking up. (edd)

The Audacious Art Experiment

Joan of Arc Joan Of Arc, Dick Cheney, Mark Twain...

I'm sorry I'm really not the person to be reviewing this, but the resident

post-rock kid just got herself a new job and seems incapable of doing anything after work other than going straight to sleep. Anyhow this record just leaves me confused. It's just too de-structured (and I do mean that rather than unstructured), and fluid for me. I've also never really liked either the organ or piano as instruments, pianos especially always just put me on edge. Sorry, I think some people would really enjoy this, it's just not me! (edd)

Polyvinyl Records

Joshua

Baggage EP

Engineer have stopped sending press sheets, so I'm not too clued up on these guys, but the emo kingpin Si Briggs informs me that they've broken up. This EP (three electric, two acoustic songs) isn't anything to shout about, the first track reminds me of later Idlewild with super pop (almost) Beach Boys-esque melodies. The third song is all a bit Weezer with the keyboards, overall I prefer the acoustic songs, but clocking in at five and four minutes each I could've listened to the Pilger 7" (maybe twice) and I know what I'd rather be doing! This doesn't suck but lacks the excitement I need! (Joe Vs)

Engineer Records

Kids Near Water / America Is Waiting / The Coalfield Split CD

I guess the common thread on this split is post rock. And the fact that they're all good. I personally preferred Kids Near Water out of the three (I can't wait for these guys to tour again), but they were all enjoyable to listen to. Check it if post-rock flicks your switch. (edd)

Kroko

Rabia

This has to be the best thing I've been given to review this time around. With no press release or explanation whatsoever and with silly song titles and kids drawings in the inlay one can only conclude that this is not some pretentious arty bollocks like you may be tempted to conclude (oh really, never even thought that!) from the music but actually the sound two people, who are insane or on their way there, make when you put them in a studio and give them the ability to make noises. It's absolutely brilliant. I've just realised how sarcastic that sounded but I'm being entirely sincere. For someone who loves the Locust, Trencher, etc these 48mins of sheer ludicrousness are fantastic. However this band has decided to completely forgo to formality of even being a band and has produced something lacks the structure one normally thinks is inherent in songs or even music and has produced wonderful noises accompanied by drums. This is so much better anything else being written these days. It's the post-modernist answer to music. (Geoff)

Tenzenmen Records (I think - it's unclear)

Lagwagon

Live in a Dive

Lagwagon have really never got me excited either way, I just always found them a bit dull, and have certainly always preferred Bad Astronaut and Me First... to their 'real' band. This live CD doesn't change much, in fact it's giving me a worse impression of the band (and to think only a few years ago there were hundreds of bands riding this style of music's coat tails) but I guess if you like the band it's got good production, and the comic inside the inlay is pretty funny. (edd)

Fat Wreck Chords

Last of The Famous

The music or the misery

You can guarantee that when there's a list of ex-bands on the press release that the only band on it that you think are crap is the one that the new band will emulate. In this case the band sounds like Saves the Day. If you like those guys you'll invariably like this. I personally think they should have focused more on the Gorilla Biscuits member, but whatever. (edd)

FourFiveSix Entertainment

Last Perfection

Drawing Conclusions

These guys play standard metallic hardcore sounding like they should really be on Victory Records. They're alright I suppose it's just there are hundreds of bands playing almost exactly the same riffs coming out of the States at the moment. (edd)

United Edge Records

Liars Academy

Demons

For this issue I was going to create a new reviewer ID called 'snuggles' because people give me a lot of 'emo' to review, so I usually just whack it on when I'm in bed having 'snuggletime' (why I am explaining all this, fuck knows) because it's usually unobtrusive and suits the mood. Anyway, this record is a perfect snuggletime record. I like the idea of Liars Academy because they've been involved with other bands I really like- Brandson, Promise Ring, Jets to Brazil- in one way or another (producers, tours). It's an indie rock'n'roll combination, with heartfelt lyrics and seductive melodies. After I got into this record it started to remind me of old Jawbreaker stuff, which I guess is a pretty big compliment. (12-0-5)

Equal Vision

Madeline

Kissing and Dancing

I really wish I knew more about acoustic music so that I could actually make some kind of description of this rather than just saying, 'Yeah I really enjoyed this, and just put some of these songs on a mix tape for my friend'. Being that this got sent for review all the way from the States I don't really think that's enough, but sorry that's all I've got in me. I

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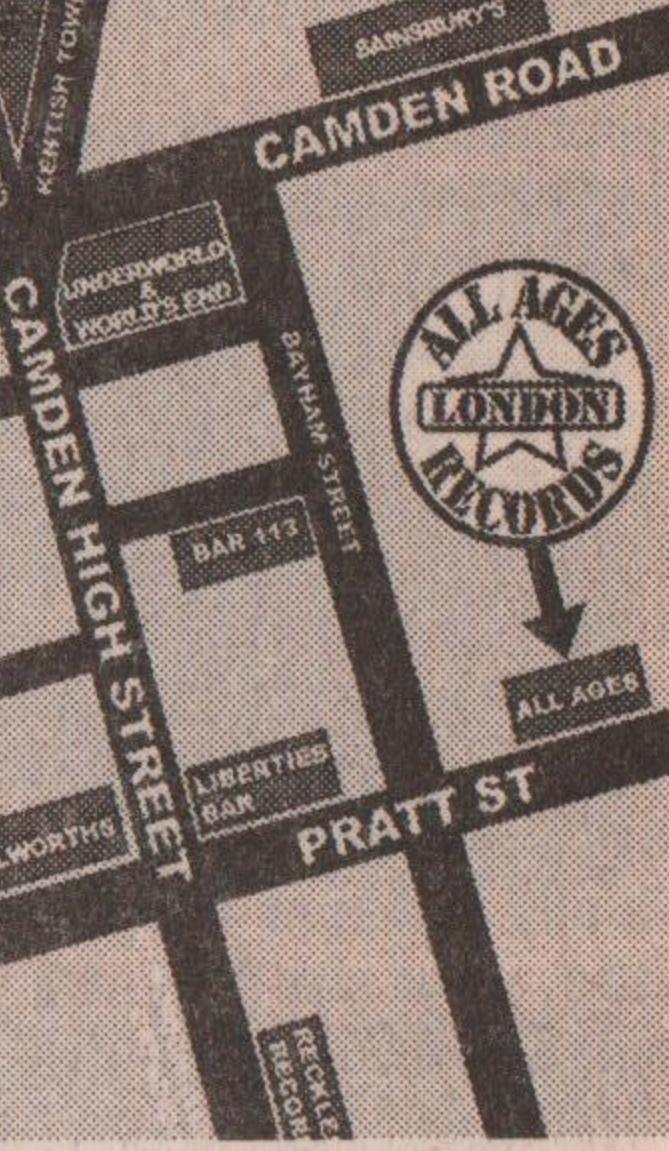
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Record Reviews

enjoyed this. It was nice hearing a female voice singing, I think it's the only one I've reviewed this issue. (edd)
Plan-It-X Records

Mantas Zero Tolerance

Bands like this disgust me. There seems to exist out there, in the realms of lunacy and metal, that distortion and double bass pedal are the only prerequisites for heavy. Have a half-fast tempo and some reviewer somewhere might even call you brutal. Through in some samples taken from police movies/shows and you could be really aggressive too. This band sounds so much like slipknot but with this start-stop structure that any arrhythmic fool could concoct in his/her sleep. This is as much a review as something this bad deserves. (Geoff)
Demolition Records

Marduk

Plague Angel

It appears that Marduk are still continuing their eternal question at being the fastest and heaviest black metal band around. Whilst not the best black metal band around this is still an enjoyable black metal thrash and is certainly better than their last release, World Funeral. Whilst any black metal purist will despise me for saying this I do think that Marduk benefit from better production so being on Regain was a sensible move for them. Marduk however are too commercial and conventional to ever actually achieve more than heaviness and speed. For me they are not revolutionising black metal for bands like Xasthur are leaps and bounds ahead of what is effectively the generic sound of Marduk which in my opinion can only be loosely described as black metal desire the posturing. In any case this is a solid release from a band who, if not breaking boundaries, are at least living prosperously within the conventional framework of metal. (Geoff)
Regain Records

Maze of Torment

Hammers of Mayhem

It's a relief to have a band from Sweden not following the successful route of Gothenburg bands like Dark Tranquillity and At The Gates. Maze of Torment offer us a lovely slice of death/thrash and as has been the general trend in the last couple of months it's this kinda music that really gets me going. I don't like sitting on the fence; that is mid-tempo-ed, pseudo heavy wannabe death bands. Not much time is devoted to soloing, which in my opinion may be a mistake, but they more than make up for it with a constant rapid paced riffing, and lets be honest, what is better than that adrenaline pumping, aggressive, heavily distorted screech from the guitars. It's truly a delight to hear. (Geoff)

Black Lodge

New Found Glory

I don't want to know (single)

Quite frankly I don't know why I said I would review this, and wish I hadn't. Any way, the first twenty seconds of this was really good with some really interesting acoustic guitar work, but then the whole song "kicks" in, and the rest of the song just tends to be what you would expect from a band still trying to pass themselves off as pop punk, when in reality this tune is worse than all of the Busted (r.i.p.) tracks I have been so lucky to hear. On a production note it is fucking terrible, delay effects overused and just generally poor quality. Artwork is pretty dire as well, a sort of lets rip off Shrek and put some punk rock stars on the cover. I should have expected this single to be bad, and so should you, so why bother even reading this review. (Darren)

The Meteors

These Evil Things

Wow, these guys have been going for twenty-five years. That's a pretty long time! The band plays a pretty cool brand of psychobilly with a healthy rock 'n' roll influence. The songs do seem to slide slightly all over the place. Some sound like it's Guns N' Roses with a double bass, whilst others sound like it's Elvis with a better guitarist. It takes a while to get used to but the rewards are worth it. (edd)
People Like You Records, peoplelikeyourecords.com

Nevea Tears

Do I Have To Tell You Why I Love You

I don't like this band. I'll make that plain and clear now so that those of you who are tempted by this sort of thing can look elsewhere and not waste your time reading me. The keyboards are a definite no-no and I'm quite frankly dismayed that the band could have ever thought they were a good idea. They sound like a bad 80s film soundtrack (anyone seen Shogun

Melt Banana/Narcosis split 7"

Nice split release on yellow vinyl put out by two cool people. There isn't much point in describing this as everyone interested in this style will know both bands already. Quickly, Melt Banana's Japanese madness is good, but not as good as other releases by them, but the Narcosis side is great grind from these Northern lads. (Christian)
Speedowax/ Superfi

My Revenge

Less Plot, More Blood

Just to jump straight in at the deep end: My Revenge play very cool fast old school punk hardcore. They also got a heavy political slant, which I didn't really expect, though definitely a nice surprise. Sure this may be a bit generic, but originality is over rated. The vocals sound like Minor Threat, the music like Bones Brigade, Rites, Cut the Shit, and all the other contemporary old school hardcore bands around but that still doesn't stop it being a fucking awesome album. They're apparently coming back over in April. (edd)
Thorp Records or www.noizz.nl

My Sixth Shadow

Love-Fading Shadow

Gothic rock has never been my thing. This record hasn't changed my opinion. The keyboards and vocals seem to be the main (most of the time only) source of melody. This and the rather weak, no balled, guitar and drum accompaniment create an atmosphere that reminds me entirely of the Rasmus. I can't actually take this band seriously. Relying on keyboards too much just makes them seem pretentious. Whereas doom metal bands have pulled off over using keyboards - Morgion wouldn't be the same without the OTT operatic keyboard - My Sixth Shadow fail miserably. While Morgion go all the way and create music that is so preposterous I can't help but love it My Sixth Shadow have held back and as a result sound like they're trying to be arty or refined. It has achieved neither, in my opinion only amounting to music I wouldn't recommend to anyone. (Geoff)
Watch Me Fall Records

New Found Glory

I don't want to know (single)

Quite frankly I don't know why I said I would review this, and wish I hadn't. Any way, the first twenty seconds of this was really good with some really interesting acoustic guitar work, but then the whole song "kicks" in, and the rest of the song just tends to be what you would expect from a band still trying to pass themselves off as pop punk, when in reality this tune is worse than all of the Busted (r.i.p.) tracks I have been so lucky to hear. On a production note it is fucking terrible, delay effects overused and just generally poor quality. Artwork is pretty dire as well, a sort of lets rip off Shrek and put some punk rock stars on the cover. I should have expected this single to be bad, and so should you, so why bother even reading this review. (Darren)

On Thin Ice

All Hope Abandon

The long-awaited 7" from Kent-based On Thin Ice finally drops, and it's well good. OTI's sound has kinda changed and developed itself along with the constantly evolving lineup (now featuring ex-xCanaanx guitarist Dargs) but they appear to have settled on something pretty neat here. Mixing the moshy "tuff" style of Blacklisted and Murder Weapon with dark lyrics and guitars that remind me of fellow

Assassin - the keyboard sounds like the music from that horrendous bastardisation of the Lone Wolf and Cub films). The vocals generate more disgust for me: they swing from a visceral and scathing screech (good) to whiney, clean emo-kid (bad). The rest of the music is near insubstantial, the band having decided the electronic theme from the keyboards/drum machine (why? They already have a drummer) was enough melody and the rest of the band needed only to fill in on rhythm. (Geoff)
Alveran Records

Nine Day to No-one

Disrecordings

All the glossy music mags inform me that I should love this, they sound a bit Dillinger Escape Plan a bit blah blah blah! To be honest I don't love this! There are moments that I enjoy, it gets pretty heavy in places but at some points it goes a little bit Tool... and I fucking hate Tool! Plus the artwork, as nice and well done as it is, looks like a Marillion record & I hate them more than Tool. These guys are good at what they do, but its just the wrong side of Nu-metal for me, the kids will love it, but... I'm 24. (Joe Vs)
Engineer Records

No Authority

No Hard and Fast Rules

These guys apparently have nine members! They sound a lot like the Slackers. It's cool hearing both an alto and baritone sax in a ska band. If you like the Slackers you need to check these guys out. (edd)
LeechRedda

No 1 Defender

The Diary Truthful EP

Unfortunately me & Engineer aren't seeing eye to eye this issue! What is this? Lyric sample "Enter the station & what do you see? The cold android is your protector, the world on call, along came a spider." Fucking hell, put some effort in! What does it mean? I'm not sure I want to know? I don't want to know what goes on in the head of a 17 year old fan of Blake 7 & Jimmy Eat World! I want to like this especially as they've made an effort with the art work (imagine the last AFI record sleeve tampered with by an emo kid in love & armed with a Polaroid camera! CRACKING!) (Joe Vs)
Engineer Records

One Reason

All rivers run south, all roads lead home

It was by chance that I heard this over the PA at a show & since getting hold of it this has become my favourite record since "No Division" by Hot Water Music (this may give you an idea of how it sounds). This is passionate hardcore similar to Avail & HWM crossed with the drinking sing along sensibilities of Against Me! but with dual female/male vocals. These are songs from a small town (something we can all relate to!) to inspire you & dust you off after the shittiest of days. Get this masterpiece NOW! (Joe Vs)
Plan-it-X Records

On Thin Ice

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Record Reviews

Canterbury kids November Coming Fire, this one is a beller. It opens with "This Frozen Hell", with a danceable hook to blow any Hatebreed MTV mosh metal bullshit right out the fuckin water, and a riff that makes my body convulse and become unable to stay still. "As Good As Dead" also has it going, with gang shouts of "PROPER FUCKED" to add that little extra sincerity that you just can't get from Roadrunner bands. The artwork's pretty swish too, done by Dwid from Integrity, like anyone who reads this zine would already know. Nate's lyrics are typically pessimistic and nihilistic, constantly baiting himself for his continued involvement in hardcore, for example: "Staring down the mouth again, singing these songs to fucking death/ I'm too old for hope but too young to feel this close to death". It's pretty cool to hear people not scared to criticise the scene, if only to balance out the ill-considered carte blanche positivity some of the more banal acts offer. OTI are out on tour with What Hope Remains from the North East in January and then again this summer with Down to Nothing from the States. Get on it children. (Alan)

Dead & Gone Records

Phyal

Crude Single

This one track single is the first I've ever heard from Phyal. Musically they're inoffensive up tempo rock. With only one track I'm having trouble digesting them and I would be interested to hear what a full album from them would sound like. Whilst this is a self-release I can easily see them joining the rostra on Newest Industries. This isn't really my thing but it's not worthy of scorn like some many of the bands I review. Effort has been expended and Phyal have taken the time to sort out their production and it sounds decent. The music isn't fast enough and lacks any abrasive edge for me to become properly engaged by this band but it has been a pleasant listen. Copies of this single are available through their website www.phyal.co.uk. (Geoff)

Self-Release

Placidstorm / Kill Winter

Strike the hour of Midnight split CD

A guaranteed way to start a record on the right track is dubbing a cool line from a cool movie. Points to Placidstorm then for doing a hardcore version of 'they're coming to get you Barbara' from Night of the Living Dead. Some people may be bored by the whole HC horror thing that's been going on for a couple of years now, but I'm still loving it. These two bands add their own spin to things with

Placidstorm taking a more rock-n-roll approach, and Kill Winter with a more straight up hardcore angle. It works well. (edd)
Cat N Cakey Records, catnakeyrecords.com

The Plague Mass (Unknown)

What can I say? Those who are lucky enough to have heard their demo songs will already know how amazing this band is. It seems to be that a daunting amount of great music is coming from one city in Austria. Back to the point, there is not a bad song on this album and they capture so many different styles and combine them together with out sounding at all disordered or unstructured. If the lyrics are the same as what I found on their website then they are fiercely political and the use of English is better than most U.K. bands and they really make you think about the world and yourself. I am afraid I am unable to mention artwork as there was not any as it probably is not done yet, and I can't comment on production as it is only a initial mix down so will probably sound even better when finished. I am not going to say anymore so just wait till this comes out as it will be worth the wait. (Darren)

Robotradio Records, robotradiorecords.com

Patient Zero / Hryduverk!

Split 7"

Patient Zero are from Boston (Not Boston) and fucking destroy. This is so much better than I was expecting. Really decent fast hardcore. There is even a photo of the Boston Godfather Marv Gadgie on their side of the record. What more could one want? Hryduverk! Are from Iceland. I've always really wanted to go to Iceland. Completely irrelevant to the review, just thought I'd let you know. Musically similar to Patient Zero, but not as good. They also throw in a Discharge cover. If you like thrash/fast hardcore I'd really recommend buying this for the Patient Zero side. Always good to know there are bands in the UK playing this style of music well. Don't be put off by the shite cover and artwork! (Christian)

Holy Shit Records xyrmux@hotmail.com

The Plot to Blow Up The Eiffel Tower

Love in the fascist brothel

My first reaction was to not listen to this. There's just too much nazi iconography and reference points littered around for this bands own good. I doubt very much whether they mean it - I suspect they're trying in a round about way to be ironic, profound and puke fun at fascists. But all the same it made me uncomfortable. Getting beyond that the music's OK. It's fairly standard modern Rev stuff (think Since By Man and make it a little more indie) and never really gets too far off the ground. All the same I've been listened to it a few times now, and I'm by no means loving it, but I think I'm beginning to enjoy it. (edd)

Revelation Records

Potshot

Dance to the Potshot Record

Imagine Screeching Weasel and The Specials doing the tango. Damn that's a good description, shame it came from the press release and not my own head. All the same it's true, they've got a bit of a mid-nineties ska sound mixed in for good measure. The lyrics confused me slightly, but as I can't speak a single word of Japanese I'm not sure I should be doing some cultural imperialism on their record. Besides the music is good enough that you don't really notice the lyrics. The best ska that I've heard in the past couple of months! (edd)

Asian Man Records

Quantice

Never Crashed

Parts of this would be really easy to describe this as 'emo', sometimes reminiscent of Pop Unknown, but switching rapidly to raw vocals, metal madness and clever riff patterns. It's definitely growing on me because of its often obscure use of melodies, but it does wander into pretentious 'this has been done a thousand times before' territory on occasion. They are really young, which is reflected in the sound, so I expect the live performance will be something to look out for as well as a more mature sound. (12-0-5)

The Death Scene (?)

Quit Your Dayjob

S/t

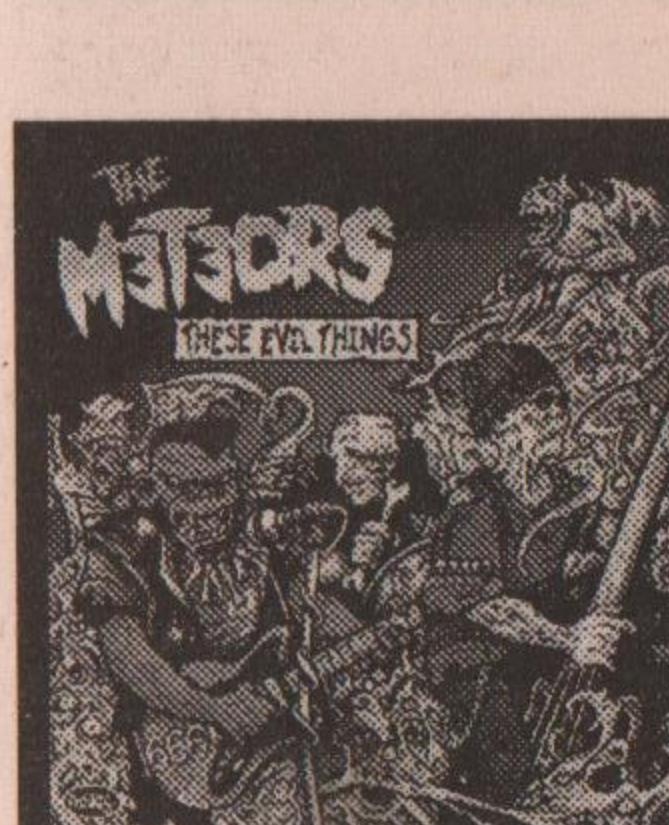
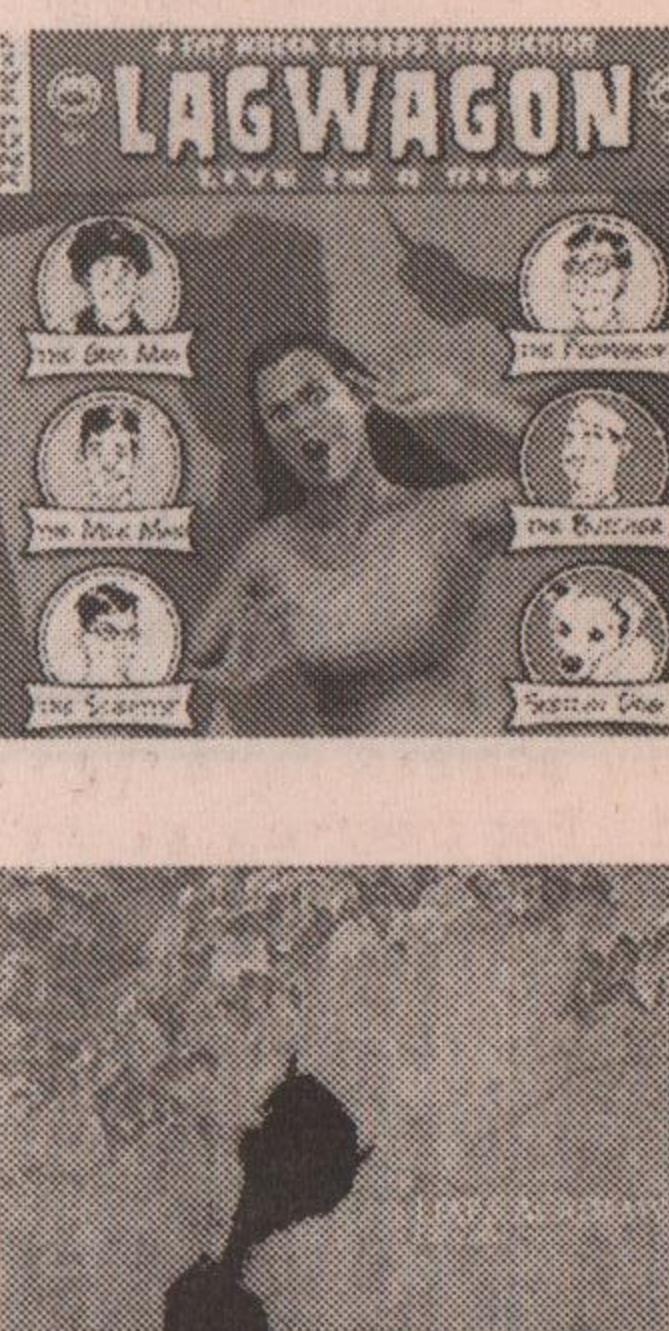
With a name this good and artwork this rad, I desperately wanted this record to be awesome. Thankfully it was. Totally retarded, moronic, electronic, rock n roll. It's the kind of music I sing to myself when I'm riding my bike. It's awesome. Really, really, really, really, really awesome. (edd)

Bad Taste Records

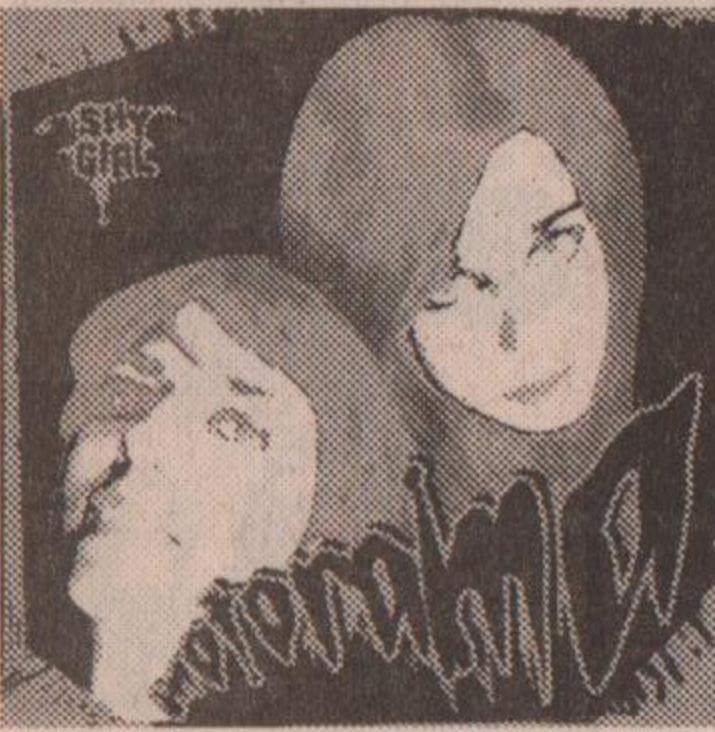
Red Flag 77

Stop The World CD

Again I'm not particularly well qualified to review this but never mind. A bit like the GBH record this is better than I was expecting. It's also a lot more melodic, dare I say poppy than I was expecting. Quite a few of the lyrics have something to say as well (I guess the name hints at that!), so I reckon if you're into pop-punk, for lack of better description it may be worth your time to check this out. (Christian)



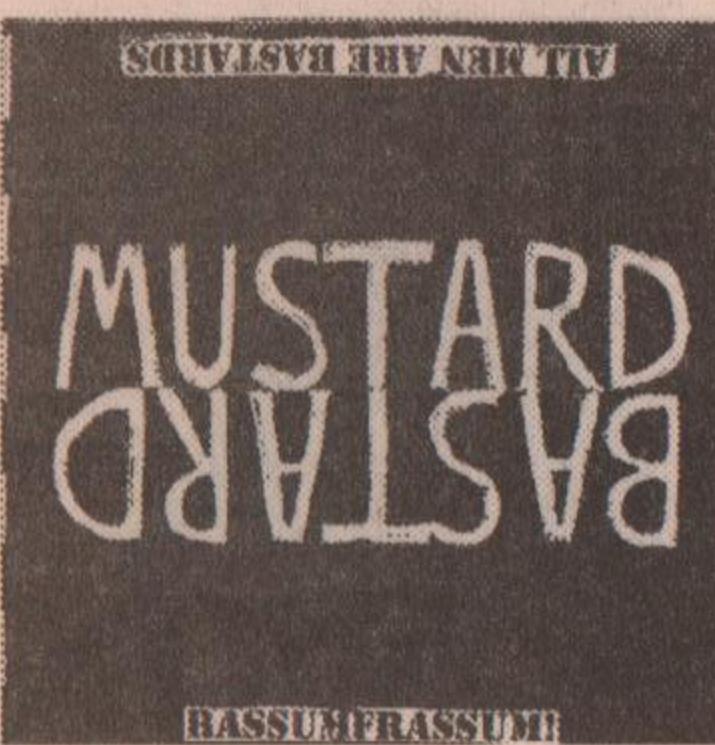
Record Reviews



Captain Oil!

Red Nettle Continuity EP

I'm bad, I think this has been lost under my sofa for quite some time now. I suppose better late than never though. I'm faced with a weird dichotomy with this band. On the one hand I'm really enjoying it instrumentally, there's a couple of amazing riffs snuck in every song, but the vocals are really driving me nuts. That's a personal opinion, if you're down with the more commercial side of rock then you'll be obsessing over this. (edd) Genin Music



sound that's more infectious than SARS. It's awesome. Listen to "Invasion/Scream and Shout" and tell me you don't love it. This band is pretty "hyped" right now, but if you like hardcore and not fashion, you won't care cos you'll love this record too much. Fortunately, they're doing a DIY UK tour too in February so catch a date of that as well for an education in hardcore punk. Sweet. Oh and buy the vinyl of this (not the CD) to support DIY hardcore. (Alan) Lockin' Out Records

Riot/Clone

Do you Want Fries with that?
So this came out a very long time ago (2000) but I got asked to review it so I am! These guys play fast Conflict-esque punk, with a heavy focus on animal liberation. Its not something I listen to everyday (not the biggest fan of Conflict) but still its a good record, and if you like that style you should definitely pick this up. (edd) Tribal War Records

Rose Tattoo

Rock N Roll Outlaws, Scarred For Life, Assault and Battery, Southern Stars

You know maybe it's just me but I'm not really getting the connection between Rose Tattoo and Captain Oil! I guess Captain Oil must have a thing for AC/DC rock. Which is what Rose Tattoo are, with the exception that the singer sounds more like Ozzy, and there's more of a blues thing going on with the riffs. To be honest I have absolutely no right to be reviewing this having a fairly limited knowledge of this style of music, so I won't bother. (edd) Captain Oil!

Rusty Sheriff

Shaking hands with the sheriff 12"
Hmmm ice, finally a vinyl release for Portsmouth's premiere noise terrorist & also the first release from Boomhound records. Having just been treated to a preview of the Sheriff's album (out some time this year?) this release pales in comparison. if you like DJ Shadow styleee cut & paste breaks then you'll be into this...it's crammed with great samples & quotes as only the Sheriff knows how. Pick this up as it will be very limited but I'd say wait around for the album which sounds much heavier & brutal, I can't help but feel this sounds a little restrained but then again I'm no dance expert or DJ so what do I know? (Joe Vs) Wild Kingdom

Shai Hulud

A Comprehensive Retrospective
My only complaint with this is that the layout, and cover of this are all hideously ugly. They should have changed the sub title to "How we Stopped Worrying and let a ten year old create our artwork". Beyond that this is pretty much essential buying/listening if you have a passing interest in Shai Hulud. Yeah the songs may not be the most polished in the world, but they're still pretty awesome, and give a good impression of what's to come. Likewise the "history" from different members of the band gives a good insight into what was going on in their heads when they were living all of this. Very rad (even if Alan doesn't like 'em). (edd) Revelation Records

Sabaton

Primo Victoria
Sabaton are one of these impossibly epic power metal bands. The stand out feature of this band are the deep and coarse yet operatic vocals. In fact I really quite like them and have decided that they are the leading asset of the band. The music however is a more typical power metal style thrash with a mid-80s hardcore rock n roll

guitar work but ultimately serving as backing to the epic vocals. And what topic could be more epic than war. So Sabaton have released an album all about war. The first Song Primo Victoria is all about the D day landings, I don't think I have to explain songs like Panzer Brigade, Wolfpack, Stalingrad and Purple heart. So there we have it, a rather dramatic band who are, if not anything else, rather enjoyable. (Geoff) Black Lodge

Santo Caserio

S/T 7"

Named after an anarchist who assassinated the French President in 1892, this is well played 'emo-violence'. Reminds me of I, Robot for some reason. Musically my only complaint is the occasional singing can be close to being a bit guff. That aside, it's nice to see a band from the UK doing this kind of music well (it's nice to see me saying that quite a bit this issue), the packaging is very good and their political. They also manage to incorporate a trombone (?) without it sounding shit. Oh, and unfortunately they've split up! (Christian) Le Sabateur Records

The Sewergrooves

Constant Reminder

I think this record has been sent to the wrong magazine. It's what I would expect to grace the pages of NME but not RN. In fact I could have been sent 6 or 7 copies and of this same CD but packaged as The Hives, The Libertines, etc, and I really wouldn't notice. I have a tendency to just clump all Indie together as Indie and then ignore it. I'm tempted to say very bad things about this record but I'm not going to. You see, whilst I feel fairly confident in my opinions over which punk or metal albums are good or bad this CD has me stumped. I don't like it. There is nothing I can say to be nice to this bad and for that fact I'm going to leave this review as is. (Geoff) Wild Kingdom

Sonic boom Six

Sounds to Consume

Well...the second release from Manchester's sonic boom six. This mini album has their previous E.P. on it as well, but you can tell they've put a lot more time and effort into the newer tracks. Over the course of 8 tracks they mix up punk, ska, regga, drum n bass, hip hop, dub and reggae into a pretty darn cohesive and very energetic sound, which although owing a heavy debt to the late, great King Prawn, is still very much their own. I don't know if it's the way they seem to flow from different genres so fluidly or the little touches like putting skits in between songs and cheekily taking the piss out of destiny's child in the opener "sounds to consume", but something about this really tickles me the right way. If there are any criticisms to be had, I know that a lot of people have problems with the vocals, but I quite like them, so um yeah... regardless, if you've been craving some severely danceable punk rock cross-over fun, pick this up. (Mikey D) Moon Ska records

Sham 69

The Punk singles collection 1977-80

This may well be one of the first Captain Oil releases we've been sent at RN, where I actually own one of the bands' records. Sham 69 - despite having a name that I never got at all - are awesome, and this collection is equally good. I don't really know what else to say about it. (edd) Captain Oil!

Snowman

Only The Dead Have Seen The End of the War 7"

This record pleasantly surprised me. For some reason, it's much better than I was expecting. Annoy, it's mid-90s style emo ala Saetia, I Hate Myself and a hundred more obscure bands. Quite impressive especially considering Snowman consists of three 17 year olds from Stratford-Upon-Avon of all places. The b-side 'I Have 104 Friends' is proper good. Only negative point I can really think of is the clichéd use of the Carlo Guilia. Apart from that 'tis a good 'un and is nice to see a band from this country playing this style well. (Christian) www.thesnowman.co.uk

Soilwork

Stabbing The Drama

I've always had a love of melodic death metal. At The Gates and Dark Tranquillity were two of the bands who I credit to really getting me into death metal so whenever I listen to any death metal that's vaguely melodic I'm filled with nostalgia. That is however not to say that I like every melodic death metal band under the sun. Soilwork I feel take melodic to such lengths that half of what they write ceases to be death and just becomes melodic metal. The biggest failing is their tendency towards melodic vocals. When people ask me to define death metal speed is always a factor but so too is vocal style. Soilwork have always run the risk of dropping out of the whole death sub-category of metal because I don't feel their vocal style is what I feel a death metal band's should be. The music in itself isn't bad but I do think it lacks the technical edge that makes bands like Dark Tranquillity so alluring. I find myself holding my breath in between each lead riff and some times I really do start to choke and gasp for air. I've tried many times to get into this band, inspired and urged on from the praise they attract, but ultimately I'm only able to truly enjoy half of what this band is offering. (Geoff) Nuclear Blast

The Splitters

Good Time Trouble

I haven't decided whether it's a cornet or a trumpet, but whichever one it is it's fucking awesome, as is this band's guitarist. Another awesome release on Do The Dog then, these guys play trad ska with a healthy dose of reggae chucked in for good measure. Good stuff! (edd) Do The Dog Music, 65 Blackdown Way, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 3FY

Stalefish1

Smashed bottles and broken fences

-This is terrible; it's just nu-metal that sounds like Taproot et al. I didn't know that people still like this shit I thought everyone had grown out of it by now but obviously not. (tom q) www.stalefish1.com

Stockyard Stoicks

Resistance

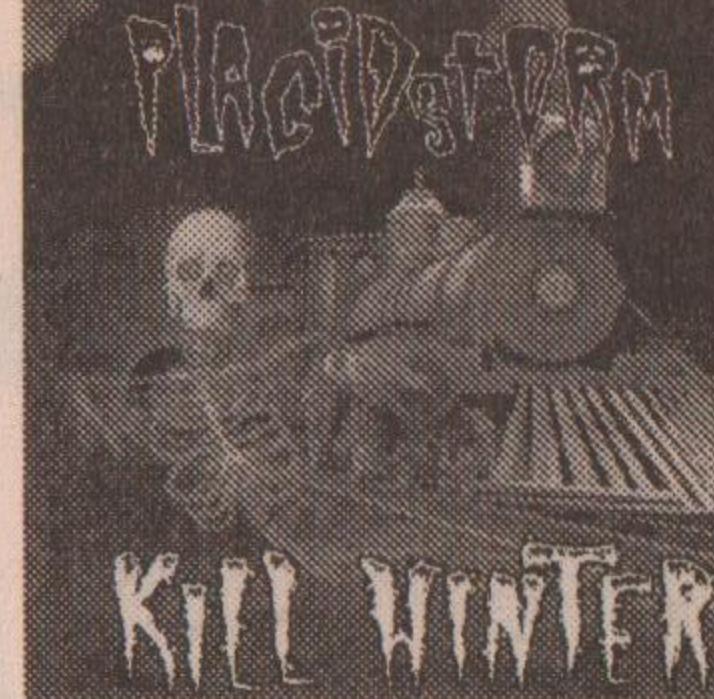
Maybe if I hadn't seen these guys play the most incendiary set in a friend's spare room a few weeks ago I doubt I would've even picked this up? I'm so glad I bothered! I haven't really listened to anything like this since Rancid sold the shit out, this is GOOD ("Let's Go"/"And Out Come The Wolves" era) Rancid mixed up with the Euro sounds of the likes of Bombshell Rocks & Wasted...but there is a Clash vibe going on too (they covered "White man in Hammersmith Palais" live!). This isn't the most ground breaking punk rock record but if you fancy something from a political band that doesn't have its own clothing line or selection of embroidered sweat bands then get this! Plenty of "woooaaahs" thrown in for punk credibility too! (Joe Vs) MSM 1279 Records

Swellbelllys

You won't like me when you're angry EP

I like being able to make analogies between things so without further ado. The Hulk - who adorns the front cover, and has been used as inspiration for the title - is one of Stan Lee's less imaginative creations. Regardless of

Record Reviews



Stop It!

Demo 10"

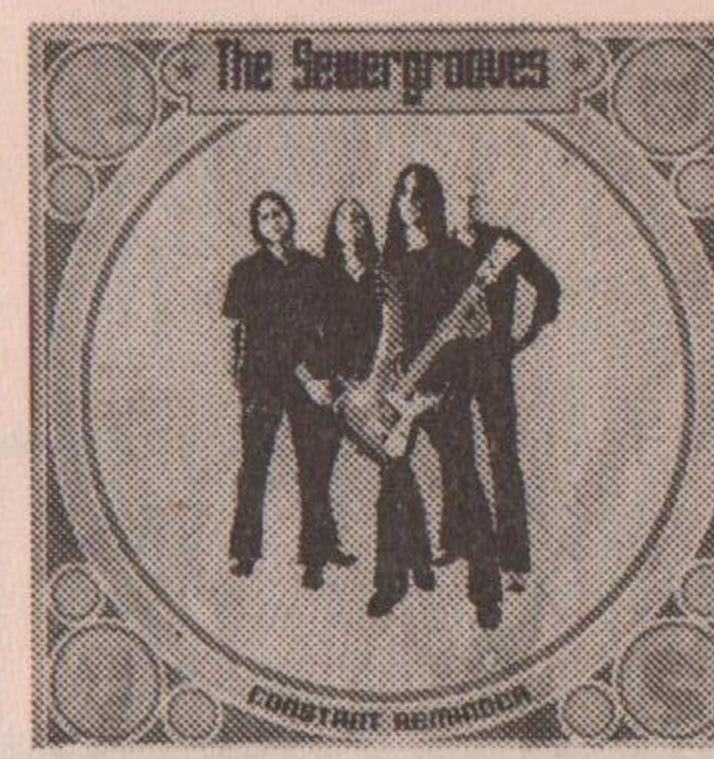
To coincide with the Stop It! Tour of Europe which occurred a couple of months back, their demo was repressed on vinyl. This is the first release by the bodacious Richard Jebb (London people - he's the one who sits at the back of the Swan with boxes of records) and his new label and is a good place to start. Stop It! Are fairly original jerky emo-hardcore. I actually prefer this to the LP on Robot Empire. My only complaint would be that the different sides play at different speeds, a pet hate of mine! (Christian) Life In A Box



Sunrise

Traces To Nowhere

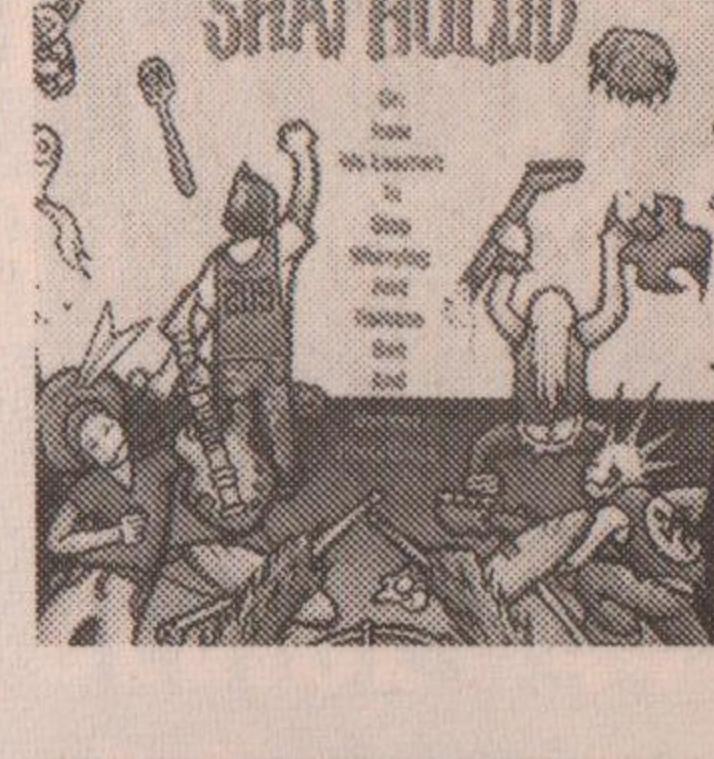
Slightly techy hardcore/death from Poland, Sunrise are interesting enough thanks to the occasional riff that piques my interest. However we aren't dealing with creative genius that is genre defining and pushing the world of extreme music into new uncharted territories. I'm getting bored of this record after only a few listens, which is a very bad sign. Traces To Nowhere is just incredibly boring. Had Lifeforce not sent us this record I certainly wouldn't have considered buying myself a copy. There are no tasty solos, or even tasty lead: the band seems to feel one or two riffs a song will suffice and to blunder along in the same tempo is also satisfactory. It's not. They need to pull out all the stops and show some flare, develop their own style and really give it their all. Listening to this record is like staring mediocrity in the face, it's like being sat down at a young age and being told repeatedly that you will never succeed in life, never do anything of consequence or worthy of praise. I know I'm being harsh here but I really can't understand the motivation behind a band that wants to write music so lacking as this. (Geoff) Life Force



Sunshine

Electric Kill! Kill! EP

Apparently as a baby the only way to make me be quiet was to put a Boy George or Human League record on. Even though these guys sound technically more like Joy Division and the darker side of the 80s sound they still make me think about Human League. You probably already know whether you're going to like this or not. I kinda did, it's got a nice soul (if that's the right word) to it. Certainly a thousand times more impressive than anything Culture Club managed to write! (edd) Custard



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I like being able to make analogies between things so without further ado. The Hulk - who adorns the front cover, and has been used as inspiration for the title - is one of Stan Lee's less imaginative creations. Regardless of



Record Reviews



this, or perhaps despite this, the Hulk is a really enjoyable comic. Same thing can be said for the Swellbellies, at the end of the day they're just playing standard fast, loud, pissed off punk rock, but its fun to listen to, and well worth getting hold of. It's £2.00 (and 60p P&P) off Peter Bower, and is limited to 500 so hurry! peterbower@alcoholic.co.uk / Po Box 132, Leeds, LS6 2RR

though. (edd)
Milk Records

Trivium
Ascendancy

Somewhere deep in my heart I guess I have a weakness for really over the top cheesy metal. Big on the double bass, guitar solos and silly gruff vocals. Trivium fulfil all these categories. They've got some kind of annoying melodic vocal bits but I managed to edit them out after I'd listened to it a couple of times. Slightly generic but all the same a fun record to listen to from time to time. (edd)
Roadrunner Records

Twofold

Hammer to the Hornets' Nest
This is a pretty massive departure from what I remember Twofold sounding like. Regardless, this is really good post-hardcore with - for a change - a synthesiser which doesn't drive me nuts. My only complaint about it is how short it is, I'm looking forward to when something longer gets recorded! (edd)
Gravity Records, gravitydiprecords.com

Twofold

Hammer to the Hornets' nest
These boys haven't released too much in the past year or two, so its good to see a new "single". This will probably be the hardest review I'll ever have to write, mainly because I have a longer history with Twofold than with any other band, I've put them on in Portsmouth more than I care to remember, played a bunch of shows together & they're good friends. that is why it pains me to say that I'm not really feeling this! The songs themselves are good, really well structured and written (except for track one being a little repetitive), but its the production (courtesy of one of the chaps from Hundred Reasons) that really grates me! For starters Jon's voice has some crazy effect on that make him sound like a Transformer & there are just loads of crazy little whirrs and noises going on. Personally I prefer the much rougher sounding Twofold (see all past releases) and Danny's singing (which isn't on here at all). I'm sure they're gonna be huge, having just come of tour with Hell Is For Heroes and all & I'm glad they're writing the kind of music they want & that they're not just churning out the same of stuff like a lot of UK bands. If this is the first stuff you've heard by Twofold you WILL love it! (Joe Vs)
Gravity DIP

Usurper

Cryptobeast
A lot of people had a dig at me for disliking Usurper's first album (and writing a very mean review) but it's actually nice that the band has gone away, sat down, thought about what they were doing, and produced an album that is actually good and has all the direction that their last album was accredited with but lacked. I actually like this record which is something I never predicted I would feel whilst reading the press release. The lead guitarist has sorted himself out and has discovered that he has his own style with out needing to reuse the same old licks that metal has been using ever since the advent of thrash/death in the 80s which was my biggest criticism with their debut. So whilst not a stunningly original or new thrash/death album Usurper have released a record that can rest comfortably on its own laurels, and is certainly a welcome addition to my record collection. (Geoff)
Earache Records

Vaux

Plague Music
I was going to give this a bad review because I hated the bullshit that was written on the press release *that* much. However, this isn't bad enough to warrant that kind of vindictive behaviour. My boyfriend described it as 'urgent angular post rock', so we'll just go with that instead. Jerky combinations of brutal vocals and melodic interludes, which sporadically work very well. Fucking cool artwork, black on black glaze. (12-o-5)
Equal Vision

Until The End

The Blind Leading the Lost
This band sound like fast generic mosh metal which is what you'd expect from eulogy. The inlay of the album says shows their support for punkvoter claiming that theirs 'nothing conservative about punk'. This release is very average and I'm sure if you like this style of music you'll already love this. (tom q)
Equal Vision

Eulogy records/
www.eulogyrecordings.com

Until The End
The Blind Leading The Lost

I had thought Until The End were going to be grind based purely on the basis of short tracks. However they play that breed of hardcore that one can only really describe as sxe metalcore. It's overall too slow and too simple (power chords, etc) for me to have any form of affinity with this band's music. There are a few nice mosh sections that I find enjoyable and at least there the band has a nice pace and bounce to it but beyond that scope there isn't much for me to get excited about. There's nothing new and it doesn't even contribute to the scene by using old elements well. It's generic and sounds very similar to too many of the bands I end up reviewing. They kinda remind me of Sentence (they're sxe too and may even be vegan) but in liking Sentence, and in no way besting them, this band are always going to be overshadowed. It's not a bad release but there are many, many other records out there that I like far more and as a result I feel no need to listen to this record. (Geoff)
Alveran Records

Usurper

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Equal Vision

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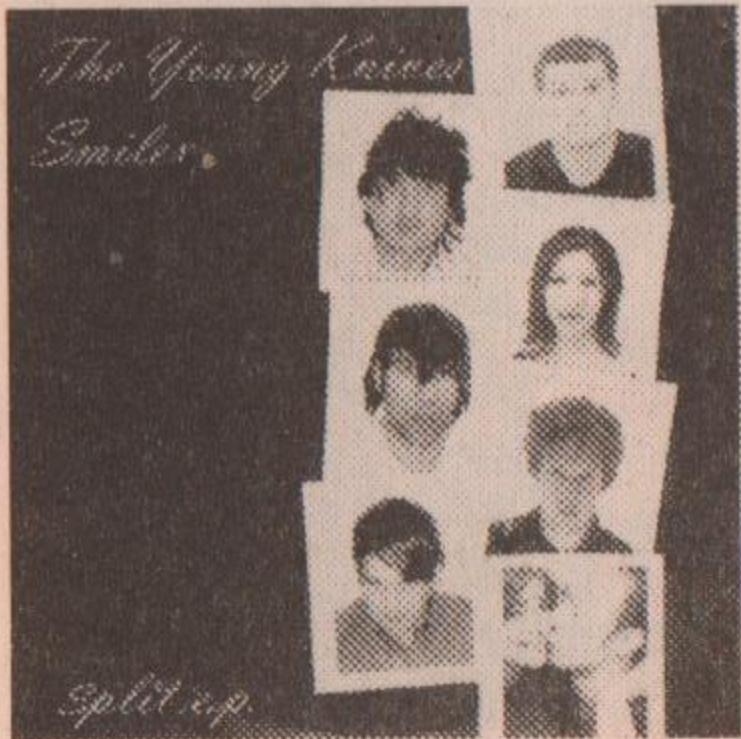
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Record Reviews

Volunteers Vs. Impact Split 7"

Okay, this is an 'anti-racist' benefit, which is always a good thing. Unfortunately, musically, it bores me rigid. Impact are standard chugga, chugga HC. Volunteers are better being quite fast, but unfortunately lack oomph. I would recommend that next time people wish to do an 'anti-racist' benefit (always a good thing!) they don't give their money to an organisation such as Unite Against Fascism, a front group for the authoritarian SWP, an organisation which slanders militant anti-fascists, relies on the State to enforce its ill-thought out antifascism and whose poorly thought through multiculturalism does more harm than good. Instead I'd recommend checking out Antifa, an independent militant antifascist organisation. www.antifa.org.uk (Christian)

Repeat Records

Voodoo Glow Skulls

"adiccion, tradicion, revolucion"

I hated this band when I was 14, and guess what? I really hate them now. The vocal's are probably amongst the worst I've ever heard, the production is terrible, the horns sound shit and it actually amazes me they're still together. Probably one of the worst ska punk bands ever. (Mikey D)

Victory Records

The Warriors

War Is Hell

Anyone who knows me and my reviews knows that I'm usually quite disparaging on the whole metallic hardcore genre, (except for the overly technical bands in a Caliban/Heaven Shall Burn vain). This is not bad, it's actually quite listenable despite relying too much on crunchy power chord riffs to carry the songs forward. The screechy vocals are the best thing here, I'm not sure what it is about them except they just seem to fit. The biggest problem I have with this band is that they feel like they want to be heavier than they actually are. Some songs degenerate into an irritating chuga-chuga timbre, like an immature beatdown, and with that they loose any of the innovations from the lead guitar. I suppose that criticism is not band specific and deals more with this style of hardcore and so even though I have enjoyed this release a lot more than bands of a similar ilk in the last couple of months it still isn't really my thing. (Geoff)

Profane Existence

too big on ska (and there isn't that much on this) but just like interesting and genuine music then you'd be a fool not to give this a try. (Mikey D)

Rough Edge Records

Whitmore Solstice Rise

I was asked if I was going to review this with an open mind. I said 'No, because Whitmore are shit'. I stand true to this statement. I'm still smirking about one of the song titles, which I would mention but the likelihood of a libel suit prevents me from doing so. This is the crappiest excuse for generic skapunk if there ever was one. This band have no imagination or skill and I can't even believe someone has the audacity to inflict this shit on the rest of the world. I only listened to the first 4 tracks, but I've just noticed there's one called 'Flicking the Bean'... Save that one for later. Yeah right.

Burn it! (12-o-5)
Moon Ska

Witch Hunt

...As Priorities Decay

So I suppose I should introduce Witch Hunt by saying they're from Profane Existence. As most of you will know Profane Existence have been putting out angry anarcho-punk rock for years now and show no signs of stopping. Witch Hunt have some good material made more prominent by the way they structure their songs: rather weird, atmospheric and occasionally dark crust that often threatens to break into thrash but still finds it's self in familiar Profane territory. It's a good release – certainly the mix between female and male (although not always distinguishable) vocals and the occasional cheeky riffs from the guitar give this band a definite character that isn't easily comparable to other bands and therefore earns merit on that note alone. (Geoff)

Wonderfools Future Classics

If I want to listen to 'rock stars' (as the accompanying press release claim these Norwegians are) I will listen to Led Zep. or Sabbath, bands which are musically excellent. Not bands like Wonderfools who can only be described as shit. (Christian)

The Wrong Side ...Of the Grave

Ah quality. I was introduced to this band (then called Dumptruck) on the Lockin' Out "Sweet Vision" compilation 7" and then the mp3 of "Suckerpunched" was put on the LO site and it was simply the coolest hardcore song I had heard in 2004. TWS feature 3/4 of Mental, with some guy called Morgado on vocals. Originally they were just a kinda Mental side project, jumping on Mental sets to play 2 or 3 songs and were about to split, but then Jamey Jasta (Hatebreed/Stillborn Records) heard them and offered to put out a full length record on the condition that they started playing regular shows. So now it would seem that they're

starting to properly function as a band, which is awesome, albeit slightly impractical considering how busy Mental are already. Anyway, the LP's really good. I can't find a bad track. In some ways it's pretty much standard fare for the Lockin' Out posse but they're probably the hardest sounding band on the label, with a lot of Breakdown-esque, um, breakdowns and mosh parts to balance out the general Warzone kinda vibe. Morgado also manages to keep it real with his lyrics. I particularly like "Positive and negative get in my way" (off "Feelin' Good"). His vocals are pretty intense too. You'll probably never see this band live so buy this record and see if you can track down a copy of the Posinumbers '03 DVD cos Morgado rips through a couple of tracks during the Mental set. Sweet. (Alan)

Lockin' Out Records

The Young Knives/Smilex

Split E.P.

There's something about bad emo/pop punk bands that makes me burn with a very visible rage. I guess it has something to do with all that brainwashing that thrash has done on me over the years but I find it impossible to actually listen to music like this for any period of time (say a song length, for instance). As far as differences between the bands go Smilex are better than The Young Knives in so much as they are actually bearable whilst The Young Knives have me baying for blood. I'm gonna end this review before I say anything that might cause undue insult or law suits. (Geoff)

Hanging With The Cool Kids

Zombina and the Skeletones

I was a human bomb for the FBI

With a name like that, this CD sounds exactly like you'd expect! Well...it sounded worse because unknown to me my girlfriend had unplugged the main speakers from the computer & it sounded AWFUL, I nearly called the number on the press release to complain. Anyway, second time round it sounds much better. I can't really identify with songs about being a teenage zombie mother fucker from hell...but I'm sure there is a big market out there for this stuff alongside bands like The Match Box 80's B-Line Disaster or whatever? I don't really get why bands send press releases bigging themselves up and saying how they've turned down numerous label offers from the UK and The States, they should've taken them up, grab the money & spent it on a really good recording. This is kinda catchy all the same (maybe a split with Placid Storm could be on the cards haha) & they're by no means shit at what they do, I bet if you were TOTALLY wrecked they'd be fun to dance to live... but I'm not a punk rock vampire so I just don't get it. (Joe Vs)

Go Jonny Go Go

V/a

...And besides everyone knows it's not just boys fun comp #1

I've spent waaaay too much time listening to this comp for it to be healthy, but in all honesty it's one of the best compilations

Record Reviews

I've ever been lucky enough to encounter. Put together by some Leeds punks the idea is to highlight the female led talent that resides in the UK, and they managed to find one fuck of a lot of talent. Ranging from metallic hardcore, towards the more "traditional" riot-grrl scopes on electronic-post punk, there isn't a boring song on here. (edd)

Heartattack Records

V/a

Off Target: A Coalition Records Sampler

There's a fairly simple equation to express the awesome-ness of this sampler. Awesome label + good packaging x 10 years of releasing (pretty much always) great records = a pretty essential sampler. The sampler reflects Coalitions output going from the out and out noise of LARM, through to the placid (if that's the right word) post-rock world of Feverdream, whilst visiting the world of (political) DIY hardcore. I see absolutely no excuse for not owning this sampler. (edd)

Coalition Records, Newtonstraat 212, 2562 KW Den Haag, The Netherlands

V/a

Org Radio #21

I have no idea what's happened to their fanzine, which is probably, at least partly, responsible for me currently wasting way too much of my time on this thing, but its good to see that Organ are still operating to some degree and putting out their 'radio' compilations. This is good if you're into metal and rock, there's some really awesome tracks on here (65DaysOfStatic, despite having a crap name, are for example absolutely stellar), though as you'd expect there's also some less strong songs on here. At the end of the day this is a fiver, and if you like your music metai then I suggest getting this! (edd)

runningriotrecords.co.uk

/

shelter.org.uk

V/a

For the Kids

Ok, so this is a hardcore comp from the now infamous town of Boston, Lincs. It's a cool mix of British and European hardcore, with a bit of crazy Icelandic band Fighting Shit thrown in for good measure.

Boasting particularly good tracks by CDS, I Adapt and Narcosis, this is a brutal and rough sounding record. This is definitely not for the faint hearted, combining pace and dirty feedback; this is made purely for rocking out to. (12-o-5)

Right to Refuse Records

V/a

Newest industry - A Compilation: 2002-2004

Ahhh hopefully some new or unreleased stuff from Black Cougar Shock Unit? No? The Enablers...no? What! All previously released stuff...apart from the odd Annalise & Paperbacks song. So on first play I felt a bit cheated. However, after a few more listens some gems that I didn't already own stood out, those being Four Letter Word (does Welly really sound like that?), Bedford Falls & Annalise (I always thought they sounded a little weak, but the new stuff is great) and they're all from the UK & Wales, just to prove the point there is a good alternative to the shit "alternative" which is forced

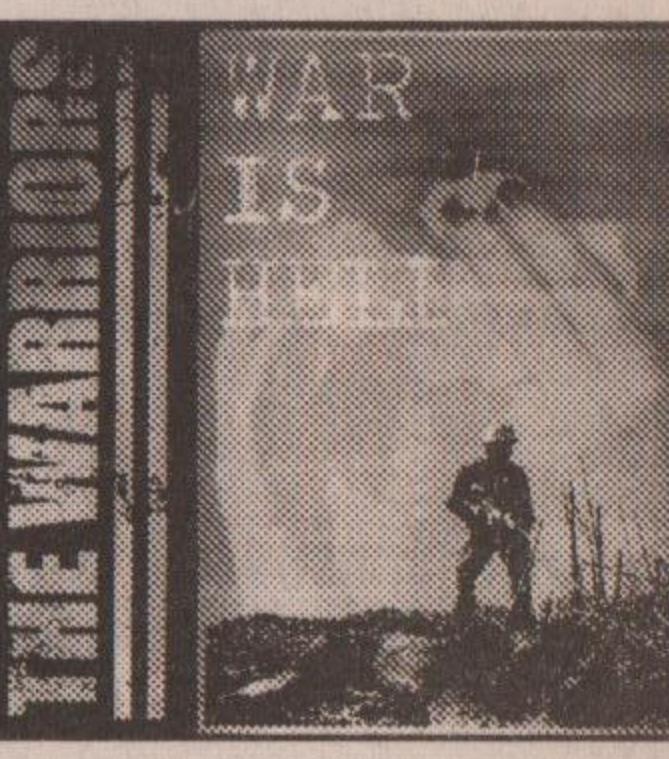
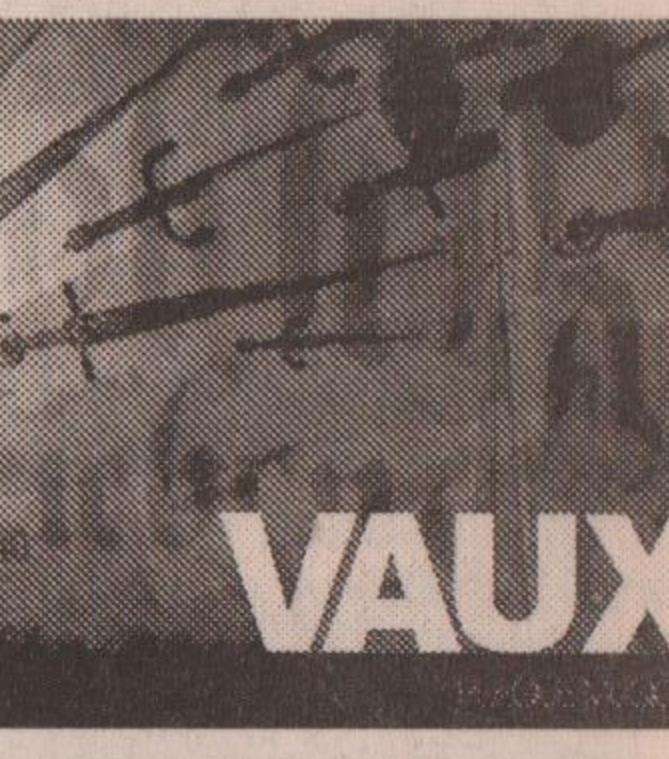
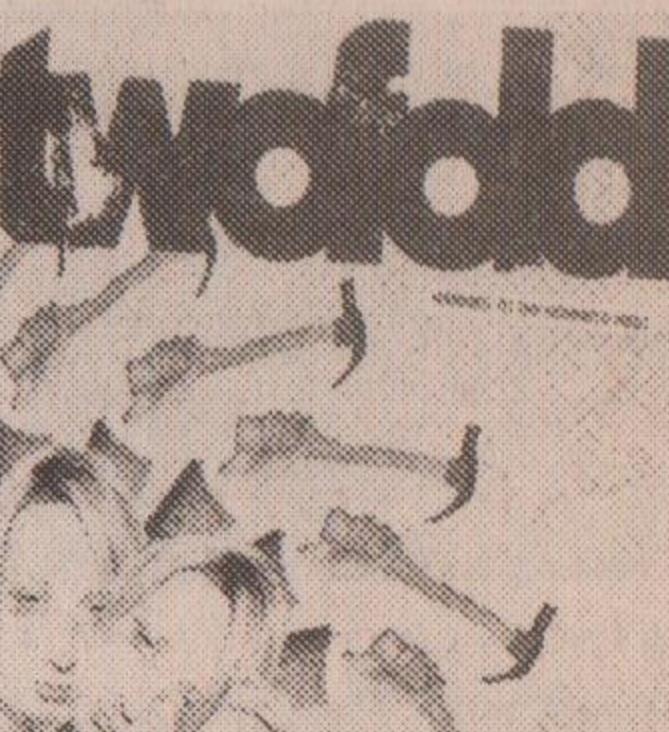
V/a

Heartattack

Before getting down into the nitty gritty of the actual review, I've got to take my hat off to whoever did the illustration work on this. It looks fucking awesome. Regardless the compilation - as you would expect - is of a pretty high calibre. To be honest they've chosen good songs of all the bands that are on

here. I thought that the "exclusive" disk was a bit of a waste of time but maybe other people will enjoy it, I'm just not that big a fan of covers. (edd)

Newest industry





Demo Reviews

11th Hour

To Hell, with love

This band totally remind of me going to heathen house when I was about 14, and the same with the peal when I was 16. Although not cringe wortingly bad at all, there is something so "U.K. pop punk band" about this, it just doesn't really have any spark and just failed to grab my attention. Sorry dudes. (Mikey D)

Dead By Dawn

Summer 2004

Chronic Fatigue got me really excited about Dead By Dawn over the summer saying how awesome they were. Then I think I kind of forgot until I saw them play London when I finally got round to getting their demo (sorry I know I'm lazy!). All the same these guys are a fucking rad band. Slightly less crust than I expected but all the misanthropy that aforementioned genre tends to dwell in, with awesome hardcore backing. (edd)

I don't got no contact details - sorry!

vGATHERv

Gather

I've reviewed the booklet of this in the zine section too for those who care! These guys are vegan straightedge, and play what can only be described as xveganx music, you know heavy chugga riffs, and lots of screaming. I really enjoy this sort of stuff, but I know a lot of kids don't. The lyrics are slightly more refreshing than normal coming as it does from a female perspective. The booklet, with song lyrics, and song explanations is also very cool! (edd) vgatherv@yahoo.com

Grogan

Gnome Magic

Demo

These guys have gone to a lot of effort to make this demo look cool and we all know that presentation is half the challenge done! My CD player is refusing to play it, though, and I haven't listened to it since I first got it a few weeks ago. Shit! I remember thinking it was good, fast punk with lots of enthusiasm, plus a questionable dip into the murky waters of ska riffs, but we'll let it slide. There's a really sweet note in the inlay asking for help to get out of Ipswich, so you can get a demo if you send two quid/blank CD to: The Jonastery, 5 Holly Lane, Belstead, Ipswich, IP8 3LZ. (12-0-5) groganband@hotmail.com

Luckfalk

Demo

If you live in London you have no doubt by now come across Barber Luck's (ex-King Prawn) new 'band', well him and his female accomplice. They play acoustic guitar and bass, with lots of vocals. It's awesome, but pretty close to impossible to describe what the fuck is going on. The other problem is that I have no idea how you would get your hands on a copy of this CD. I suppose there might be some details on the old King Prawn site, if it still exists. You have to see these guys live as well. They're absolutely amazing! (edd)

The Mercury League (demo)

I love this band! You have to go see them live because the strength of their performance will have you hooked. Tight, metal influenced melodic punk with offbeat rhythm combinations and amazing vocal harmonies. I think this demo will cost you something like £2, so you could do far worse than spend the cost of a pint on it (and that's ME saying that!). Thumbs up for Sunderland! (12-0-5) email chris for contact, she didn't include details with review!

The Plague Mass

This is without fail the best demo I have ever heard. Obviously this band has a head start on being good because most of the band members have been in other amazing bands (Antimanix, Pledge Alliance, etc.), but this is just great! They play really technical hardcore, drawing influence from bands like Catharsis, with constant double kick fuelled rhythms and triple vocals contributing to the diversity in the sound. Another great thing about this is their friend Leah doing backing vocals on the first track. You have to listen to it to understand, but she has the scariest hardcore voice ever! Go listen- <http://www.theplaguemass.at.tl/> (12-0-5)

Present Black

Demo

Present Black has provided us with a nice little 3-track demo. The easiest way to describe them is emo. With vocals reminiscent of At The Drive In, (but without the discordant melodrama the rest of said band provided), and guitars/drums filling mainly a rhythm role it's really the vocalist that does most of the leg work in providing melody, structure and coherence to the tracks. Whilst I've never been a fan of emo I do enjoy bands like Whirlwind Heat who lack all lead from the guitars leaving the vocals as the main source of melody for the songs and I feel Present Black have some potential if they follow through in this particular direction. It ultimately leads to an edgy, confrontational style of music that is unnerving yet catchy and distinct. I should like to think that Present Black will continue to explore the direction they've set out in this demos and hopefully their hard work will bear fruit. (Geoff)

Self release (presentblack@hotmail.com)

Restless Youth

Bad Trip (demo)

Woah I'd heard good things about this band but I didn't know they'd be this good. Hailing from Holland, my first exposure was when they jumped on Dead Stop's set @ NinjaFest and then dived off after 3 songs. I think about 2/3rds of the audience didn't have a clue what was going on, but who cares. Anyway, I snapped a demo and they sound like fuckin' Bad Brains with Howlin' Pelle from The Hives on vocals. Which is bizarrely awesome. Seriously, bands like this, Dead Stop and Justice are completely redefining 21st century European hardcore. They're stripping it down, and pushing it back to 1980, when this shit was so fucking fresh it sounded like an explosion. I even smell a bit of Kennedys influence in here!! Listening to this demo I get the feeling that this band aren't just *playing* hardcore, they're fuckin' living it. Unfortunately I managed to miss their UK mini-tour in November cos I was promoting my own show the night they played someone's house in London (something I think I'll regret for the rest of my days), but they got a record coming out on Dead & Gone this year so I'm sure you'll all be catching them soon. (Alan)

Taking Names

Demo

A heavy release from metal/hardcore debutantes Taking Names, whilst not a startlingly new sound they've shown quite strongly that they work together well as a band, timing and direction well nailed down and a developing sound of their own. Having said that I need to further stress that they are still lacking their own sound. This is however a demo and an admirable first release. They've shown they are capable of doing what a lot of band with record deals do. If this is their first step then we can expect them to develop into a more interesting and complex entity such as comes with time and experience. However

★★★

they still have a long way to go before then. Not trying to force what I think constitutes good music against the plans that have for their music, heaviness should become their watchword. The intermittent splattering of melody on the demo is by far the weakest element of the music and the one thing that turns me off. I could so easily see them tearing off, like so many others, in this direction and it would truly be a shame. (Geoff)

Self release (mail@takingnames.co.uk)

Schumaker Levy

Demo

This band features two of the guys from Escanna & couldn't sound any more different. They've ditched the Shellac sounding rawk and gone balls out! It sounds a lot like Quicksand crossed with something scream (Daz at cat n cakey tells me Will Haven, but I was never a fan). It's nice because you mention "Screamy" you think Kerrang/Funeral For a Friend and dead horse, but thankfully they've reached back to earlier influences to create something original, but not generic like most of the shit choking the air waves & press. I'm yet to see them live, but if they put in the energy that went into Escanna I'm sure we're onto a winner, look out for these guys. (Joe Vs)

SecondsxOut

Demo

OK the tape of this got all yanked out all over my bag somehow, so I can no longer listen to it. Which sucks, cos I reckon I probably only listened to it about twice. Whatever, this band has current and former members of The Last Chance, The Down and Outs and probably some other bands too. And it's way good. I rank their intro as one of the very best any band came up with in 2004 but the demo's in a completely different style. Fast, thrashy and very, very fucking pissed off. KevxWalsh's highly personal yet highly aggressive vocals are not to be missed. He's also kinda scary, especially when he calls you "another notch on my baseball bat" ("Another Notch"). Live, they're fucking immense, including when they jumped on On Thin Ice's set at the Dead & Gone release show in December and Walsh wore his parka coat while kids were diving all over him! SxO are clearly trying to strip hardcore down to its simple shit-talking thrash origins, which I think would be definitely be a good idea. Check it if you're into Tear It Up, Outbreak and shit like that. Actually, fuck it, check it anyway cos your life would be better for having it. I think they have a 7" scheduled as Murder Contest's first release. (edd)

Skylar

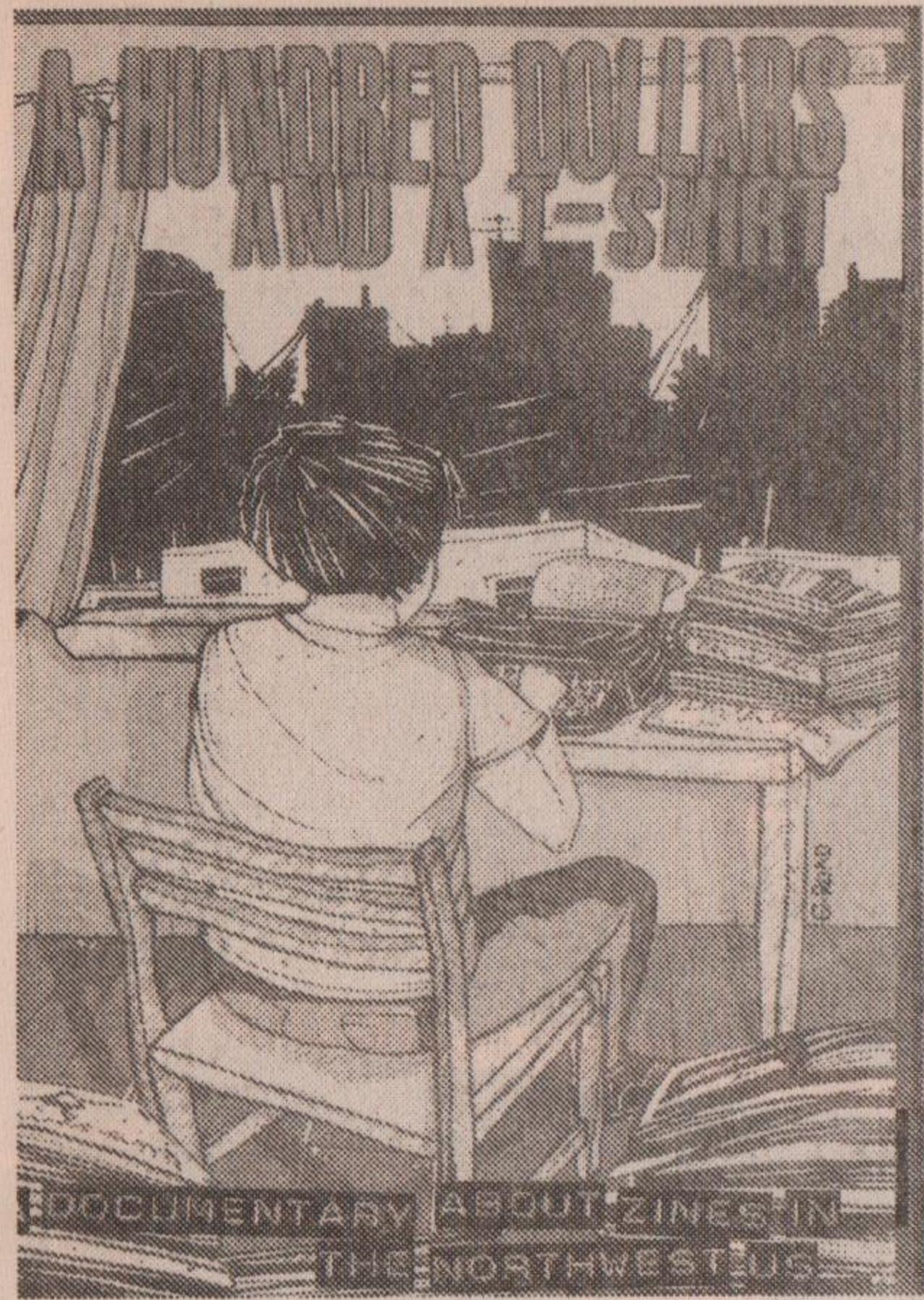
Skylar are a project involving Nick and Matt from Howards Alias with two of their friends. As you might expect they're really good. Despite only one acoustic instrument (the guitar) there's a nice acoustic, and chilled out vibe to the whole band. They're a little bit special. Likewise there's just something really special about Matt's vocal style and about how open he is with his lyrics. I think the only way to get a copy of this is to talk to the band when you see them live. (edd)

Tearjerk

Never Forgive Never Forget

From the way that the demo's been packaged I expected this to be more post-rock than it is. What I got instead was a really fucking awesome hardcore punk band with some amazing lyrics. The vocal style kind of reminds me of American Nightmare, whilst musically it all comes from the Strike Anywhere end of things. It's the best demo that I've heard in a good number of months. Well, well worth picking up. (edd) www.tear-jerk.com





Movie Reviews

We've started to get sent a few DVDs recently so figured we may as well review 'em. This'll hopefully be a regular thing so send movies to review to the Po Box address. Just to pre-warn we're not going to review bands 'home video' DVDs cause for the most part they're lame and for MTV-bands. Beyond that we'll review anything so long as it's got something to do with punk, politics or alternative lifestyles.

Against Me!

We're Never Going Home

So the whole world and her dog seem to be releasing DVDs at the moment. I mean I know 'Home Videos' have always been a good stopgap between albums for bands, but it's been getting a little bit silly recently. With that in mind I was more than a little sceptical about this DVD. I was wrong. This is awesome. Really awesome. It's perhaps slightly too high praise to alken it to a modern day 'Another State of Mind' but it's not far off. It documents Against Me!'s East Coast Tour of Spring 2004, complete with the major label A&R guy, drunkenness, parties and their gigs. It's a pretty good document of where Against Me! are right now, and is pretty good at showing the difficulties of being a big fish in a relatively small scene. It would have been nice if they could have made a little bit more of the difference between Against Me! and the other bands at - what I presume - was Asbury Park's (NJ) 'Skate and Surf Fest'. It would have been interesting to compare how different the world's that they live in are. All the same there are some interesting interviews with Var from No

Idea, the kids in Ghost Mice who run Plan-It-X Records, Fat Mike, old band members, the current band members, and the son of the singer of No Choice (the scene where he's trying to drunkenly describe why Against Me! are awesome is hilarious). The documentary also deals briefly with the predictable backlash that independent bands get when they start to get bigger, and does it quite well - not least with the Plan-It-X interview. All in all a pretty awesome documentary, and if you're a fan of Against Me! it also manages to perfectly capture just how fucking special their live show is!

Fat Wreck Chords

Alice Donot

London, There's a Curious Lump In My Sack

Another punkervision output. As you should have come to expect by now the recording is top notch and generally allround good job, I

especially liked the interview in the 'special features'. I'm still not sure anyone gets anything out of DVDs if they don't know about the band, but if you're a fan of Alice Donot you should really pick up this DVD! (edd) punkervision.com

Genoa: Red Zone

Whatever Force Necessary

I guarantee this Indymedia documentary will make you angry. This documents the G8 protests in Genoa of 2001, where Carlos Guilliani was murdered by the police, and where people sleeping in their "safe" rented building were attacked in the middle of the night. I suppose it was here the proverbial gloves came off and the police, and their masters, showed their true nature. Thankfully for the G8 the mainstream media failed almost absolutely in reporting this news, which is why this Indymedia documentary is good. It not only shows the repression that

the police met out, but it also shows the beautiful resistance, ideas and creativity that the anti-capitalists who met at Genoa created. This is one of the very, very few 'summit protest' movies that isn't boring, and I've yet to see one that was this indepth!

Indymedia, Po Box 587, London, SW2 4HA for more copies

One Man Army

Live at the Troubadour

I'm not really a fan of 'live' DVDs. I'm even less of a fan when I don't like the band. This is totally standard. It's got several camera angles, relatively good sound quality, and about as much passion as someone who's about to sit through a party political broadcast. I guess if you like the band then you'll probably like the DVD. (edd)

Kung Fu Records

Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism

Directed by Robert Greenwald

I wasn't just interested in this because I'm a journalism student, although I would recommend any journalism student to go and see it simply because it highlights what happens under the power of corporate media giants and when you are forced to compromise your own integrity. This is a documentary concerned primarily with Murdoch's control over the Fox Television network in America and the way in which the truth is distorted in order to manipulate the general public into believing the Republican Party line. I find this particularly important in light of Bush winning the election after learning that Fox was restricting coverage of Kerry's campaign and championing Bush's 'War on Terror' as part of its right-wing propaganda pushing. This exposé is intended to combine irony and horror, which is done successfully with humour. The clips of Bill O'Reilly (Fox news reporter) telling everyone he doesn't agree with to 'shut up, shut up, shut up' are both funny and horrifying, particularly whilst he's framed by the 'Fair and Balanced' neon text (incidentally over which they are being threatened with a law suit because it misleads and deceives the public into thinking they are hearing truthful news). The best part of this

documentary is when the stop the war campaigner whose father died on 9/11 comes to discuss the war in Iraq with Bill O'Reilly and he refuses to let him speak, calling him a traitor to his family and country and eventually cutting his mike. This underpins the essential aim of this documentary, which is to drive home how blatantly the people are being lied to and how Murdoch's enterprises are the furthest thing from 'fair and balanced' that they could be. I left the screening with a bitter taste in my mouth because even the people who no longer work for Fox News were afraid to be captured on film for fear of threats to their family and careers. The extent of Murdoch's power and influence is truly terrifying. (12-0-5)

Peepshow 3

So, these are always a lot of fun. Bad punk rock acting and some low budget filming makes good entertainment. The best video on here has to be Sick of It Alls because they created a really cool comic sketch about two punks on bikes who enter a strange world of demons and politicians. There are some great bands on here; The Lawrence Arms, None More Black, Rise Against and Avail. Plus some fantastic hilarious videos, in particular The Lawrence Arms' mock-porno video for 'Porno and Snuff films' and Goober Patrol's '1000th Beer'. I think their budget was considerably lower than the rest of the Fat Wreck bands considering it consists of them in sailor costumes sailing a boat somewhere in Norfolk, or else they just blew their entire budget on hiring the costumes and didn't save any for the filming, but it's funny all the same! Anyway, there's no surprises here, but if you like Fat Wreck then you'll like this. Enough said!

Fat Wreck Chords

Pistol Grip

'The Show Must Go On'

I didn't have as much time with this as I wanted because I don't have a DVD player at my place. However, I've watched most of it this morning and it's pretty cool. As I'm not that familiar with Pistol Grip, I can't really tell you how well they perform their songs, but the filming is really well done from multiple angles and there's quite a lot of fun extra stuff included on the DVD. (edd)

you're a fan then I expect this is something you really should get your hands on because there's a lot included, it's not just a live performance and a crappy interview at the end like some bands do! I'll try and ignore the fact that the guy talks about his local church and dedicates a song to 'all those religious people out there'. Kung Fu Films.

This Is What Democracy Looks Like

One of the first big protests I went on I remember hearing the chant 'This is what democracy looks like'. Immediately afterwards the group I was with got baton charged. As far as I was concerned the chant was expressing that democracy is a shame enforced by hired thugs like cops to prop up this elected dictatorship. Apparently others who sing the chant - and most of the people (apparently) in the States - believe that us being on the street is showing how awesome democracy is. Oh well I guess this isn't really relevant to the review, but this documentary was really fucking dull, and I couldn't think of anything to say about it so thought I'd make a dig at its name, which is stupid! (edd)

Indymedia, see above.

X-treme Snowboard Trax

When a DVD has to put on its back, "Parental Warning: This product is not suitable for viewing by parents. It contains over 60 minutes non-stop of very loud punk rock music which can cause severe brain damage in the un-initiated. etc", you just know it's going to be crap. The fact that only two labels supplied all the music (Epitaph and Eat Sleep) there's also the sneaking suspicion that this may very well just be some big marketing ploy to con teenagers into believing that Epitaph epitomise "punk rock". Unsurprisingly it's not very good. Don't get me wrong the snowboarding side of it isn't bad, since that's produced by Black Diamond Films who kinda know what they're doing, it's the music and editing side that are internally dull. If you want to watch a decent snowboarding movie bypass this and just go straight for the Black Diamond back catalogue. Oh also if memory serves etiquette demands that the snowboarders should be named when they're pulling the tricks. (edd)

Comic Reviews



Charley's War - The Somme

Pat Mills / Joe Colquhoun

Titan Press / £14.99

I suppose outside of the 2000AD world that Pat Mills is a fairly unknown name. It shouldn't be that way but I guess that's the way it goes. The most important about Charley's War is that it's an anti-war comic. A lot of people are able to compartmentalise it into simply being an anti-WW1 comic, but as Mills' introduction makes clear there's no such thing as a "just" war. It's one of the few war stories that I have any time for at all. I have some time for Rogue Trooper, but again largely because it's clearly painted as an anti-war comic. The difference between Rogue, and most of the comics produced in the US and UK, and Charley's War, is that Charley's War for all intents and purposes is real. Factually there's not a whole lot that can be pointed out as being 'fantasy'. The other

difference is that the other comics didn't have Joe Colquhoun working on them. Though he died back in 1987, he may well be one of the best artists to work on comics. I personally would have liked Titan to have collected all of Charley's War (at least up to when Mills stopped writing for it) in one edition, but I suppose the logistics of that would have been near impossible. This is a comic I think that everyone should read, not least those that think there's some kind of "honour" in warfare. (edd)

Pat Mills

Brain Wood/ Becky Cloonan

Alt/ Planet Lar / £2

I'm reviewing the September (?) issue of this comic because I haven't really enjoyed the final two issues (#11 and #12) and being that I've really enjoyed the whole of the series up

until now I didn't really want it to end on a sour note, not least because it's about the only thing by Brian Wood that I've enjoyed! Regardless, this issue has a twist kind of against the series, which caught me by surprise, and I suppose goes to show that at least some comic book writers like to keep people on their toes. Likewise I really enjoyed Becky Cloonan's artwork - as usual. I really like the fact she uses mixed media and trad halftones and things. It seems that with the advent of Photoshop, gradients, filters and blends that this sort of stuff gets passed over cause it's not quite as glamorous as a lighting effect render (not to say that Photoshop is bad - we wouldn't have had a cover this issue without it - it's just nice to see something different!). Well worth checking out, I'm looking forward for the much promised trade paperback. (edd)

Alt/ Planet Lar

Nightmares and Fairy Tales - Once upon a Time

Serena Valentino / FSc

SLG / £9.99

I suppose the easiest way to describe this is to say it does exactly what it does on the label. It readapts common Nightmares and Fairytales and, through the narrator (a doll named Annabelle), brings them into a contemporary setting. The stories hinge around Annabelle, who having seen all the suffering, thinks that she's responsible for it all. To be honest Annabelle is the only real bit of continuity in

the comic, I think I've finally managed to pick up all the threads, but if you thought GloomCookie had a convoluted story line then wait till you try and read this. This isn't to say that it's not a good read. It is. Some of the individual stories - such as the re-telling of Snow White - are absolutely stunning, and FSc is a truly amazing artist with a wonderfully jagged style of drawing. It's the introduction of Gwen though in #5 when this series really starts to pick up and become interesting. Unfortunately this trade paperback on collects up till #6, but it's clear just from the two chapters she inhabits in this book that Valentino has managed to find another character to compliment Annabelle, and make the stories slightly easier to relate to. To be honest I'm going to be a lot more excited when issues #7 to #12 are collected, which I would assume will happen sometime by the end of the summer.

Slave Labor Graphics

The complete: If ordinary people behaved like...

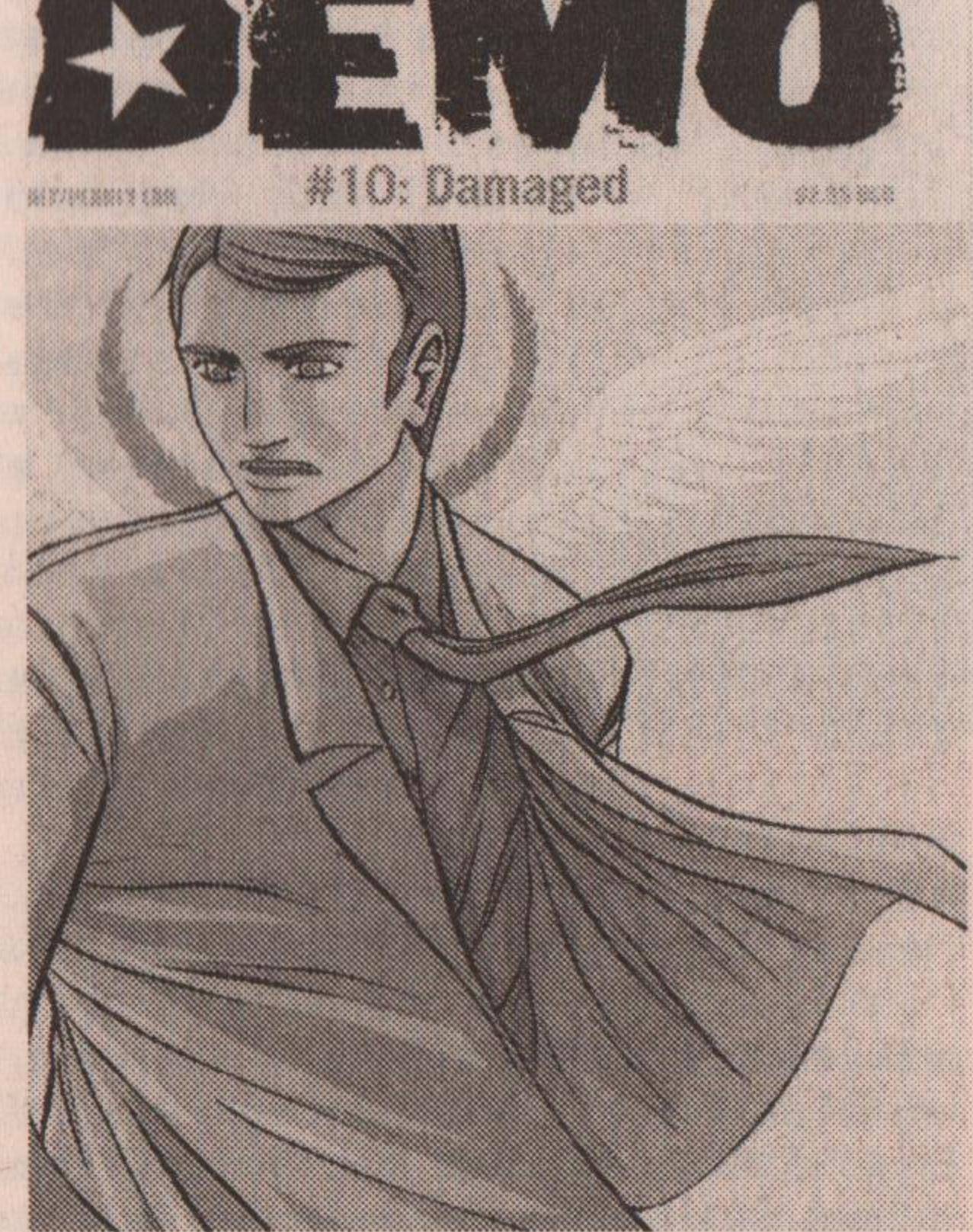
Polyp

Ethical Consumer/ £3

Polyp is the alter ego of Paul Fitzgerald, who does cartoons for New Internationalist and Ethical Consumer - among other things. He also unofficially does cartoons for things like SchNews and Do or Die, cause everyone thinks his cartoons are awesome so keep stealing them. 'Ordinary People...' sees him juxtaposing what corporations do against what average, ethicalconsumer.org

"...striking and substantial..." - The Comics Journal

BRIAN WOOD / BECKY CLOONAN



normal human beings do. i.e. You have a strip where a BAE executive sells a kid a knife to kill another kid with the catch line of, 'Well if I didn't do it, someone else would!' Every cartoon in here is depressingly hilarious, depressing simply because of how insightful the cartoons are. Highly recommended.



Fanzine Reviews

All or Nothing; For Radical Suicide (a pamphlet)

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 16 pages/ free

This is a response from people in the South London 56A Infoshop to the pamphlet put out in mid-2004 entitled 'You can't rent your way out of a social relationship'. 'All or nothing...' serves short thrift to the idea, presented in 'You can't...' that all rented social spaces are inherently bad. As the author of 'All' expresses if there's a choice between an 'All or Nothing' s/he will always choose the 'or' since they're not 100% sure on what the best approach is. Personally I really enjoyed this pamphlet, and it made a lot more sense than the absolutism of 'You can't...'. Some people might find it a bit esoteric though. (edd)

Are You Still Laughing?

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 24 pages/ Free

I think I actually got this at NinjaFest back in October but I just found it clearing up my room and got round to reading. Interesting hardcore zine from Middlesborough that's not scared to cover bands beyond the narrow hardcore spectrum. The only thing that really pissed me off about this zine was the interview with "local black metal" band Grimification, who decided to spend the entire interview attacking hardcore, only stopping to eulogise Dead Stop (?!). If you don't like hardcore, don't go to the fucking shows, simple as. The writer also chooses an interesting reprint of a Necros interview from 1984, in which the band also take a few swipes at hardcore. Based on those two interviews, I kinda got the feeling that the guy was trying, in a rather sarcastic and imprecise way, to counter the whole "posi" deal that sometimes seems a bit...mindless. He includes something of a disclaimer at the back, saying how he loves the UKHC scene right now, but not "everything, this doesn't make me miserable or unsupportive". I ended up really liking this, the guy seems really honest and open, which is kinda necessary when some people and zines just give hardcore bands a carte blanche "for trying". Also features interviews with lovable rogue Oxley from What Hope Remains (and instructions on how to make Teesside food with Craig from the same band) and a reprinted Septic Death interview. I think these are all out, but if another one turns up, get it, cos this guy will make you laugh and think. (Alan)

Boro_core@yahoo.co.uk
A Short Fanzine about Rocking #11
A5/ b&w/ printed/ 40 pages/ £1
The highlight of this was an interesting interview with Awoken, really good

perspective of what's going on in the life of their band at the moment. The rest of the zine has interviews with Throwdown, Senses Fail, Eighteen Visions, Minus The Bear, Johnny Truant and Goldie Lookin' Chain, plus a whole load of reviews. There's nice aesthetic style to this as well! (edd)

66 Northern Grove, West Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2NW

'Bad Taste', #1, 50p



grabbing fashion machine..." Ross' embarrassing story section is also funny in the most hideous way possible, mainly cause I realise that I made a grave error in contributing one of my darker moments for everyone's amusement, however this guy has said and done some horrific things that he lays bare for us. The interviews with Suicide Machines, Freaks Union, Belvedere, Fallout40, Anti Flag and Bouncing Souls are all pretty good although it would have been good to see a little bit more diversity in sounds represented. Finally, the article on SUV's is really funny and true, so well worth a read. All this zine needs is a better cover, although it does make me chuckle. (12-o-5)

Email Chris for the address cause she didn't include it with the review!

Bristle #17

A4/ b&w/ printed/ 42 pages/ £1.50

Despite having this for several months now I still haven't had the chance to sit down and properly reading it. It looks interesting, lots of political info from the South West of England. The one article I've read 'A prison without bars' was really awesome. (edd)

Box 25, 82 Colstan Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB
Burn Down the Disco #2
A5/b&w (black/pink cover)/copied/60 pages/£1.50

This zine's got a really cool individual vibe. It comes outta the Canterbury hardcore scene (probably my favourite established

Fanzine reviews are opinions don't get bummed if you didn't get as good a review as you think it deserved! More importantly if you're sending off for a zine remember to send an SAE, or an extra 50p to cover the cost of postage. Also remember to give them your address. I know that sounds like a no-brainer but seriously write your name and address in as many different places as physically possible, that way it's harder to lose it!

scene in the country), but it's more than hardcore zine, being more of a personal zine based along the writer's tastes. Which, incidentally, are pretty much awesome. The Permanent interview makes for really great reading, especially since I agree with 99% of what Conan says, good to see some kids are repping 70s punk again to counter some of the less enlightened individuals who act like hardcore came outta nowhere in 1981 with Minor Threat and isn't at all punk. Fools. Anyway, there's also a pretty cool interview with Nate Thin Ice (man, he gets a lot of interviews) and probably the best November Coming Fire interview I've read to date. Also interviews with Innocent Blood and I Defy and a bit of a shambles of a Pretty Girls Make Graves interview, which the writer quite rightly cusses them for. Dude, what can I say, #5 (I think) of this zine has a really great PGMG interview...maybe you caught 'em on a bad day. Shit like this also serves to remind you how much worse members of bands outside the hardcore/punk scene really are. Be thankful for what you have kids. Check the Black Flag reprint from their "Everything Went Black" record, it makes for fuckin awesome reading. There's some filler in here though, like some rather self-indulgent "arty" pictures of boobs and a few too many Top 5 lists (although I do think High Fidelity's quite a good book). This guy's firmly rooted in his local CT scene, and that's awesome, cos I love that town. I have quite a few friends inside and outside the scene and the shows are always really great. But whatever, outta all the zines I picked up lately, I identify most closely with this one. I'll even forgive the guy for having a name dangerously close to my gig collective (haha jokes, he probably got there first anyway). (Alan)

109 Melville Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 7UT
Chairman of the Bored #20
A4/ b&w/ copied/ 32 pages/ \$4(?)

This is a zine put together by a bunch of punks stuck in the US penal system. Apparently it really offended Slug n Lettuce and MRR, which confuses me cause I can't find anything that offensive in it. As you may - or may not - expect the zine is pretty much exclusively made up of rants, drawings and comics. I personally really enjoyed it. It gave a different perspective on "prison" and how totally messed up an idea and institution it is. Some of the Chairmen are also fucking funny. Good read. (edd)

http://fanorama.tk
Courage to Care #5
A4/b&w/printed/40 pages/£1.50 (?)

Latest issue from PetexBust of Fifty on Red and Katie, who does the distro all you hardcore kids squander your pocket money on. This zine just gets better and better. It's fast taking up the mantle of Definitive UKHC Zine, especially now that Murder Contest appears to be on indefinite hiatus. Also,

Fanzine Reviews

Facial Disobedience #3/You've Come to Take My Toys Away #1

A5/B&W/Copied/48 pages/30p or trade

A split zine from two Southampton south coast hardcore punks. The FD side is Phil's intermingled stories of becoming a library attendant, drinking with friends, Getting lost in Salisbury and having to sleep out overnight, and attending the European Social Forum, and more unofficial, fringe events surrounding it, in London last year. The writing style flows nicely plus it also has a few short and sweet zine reviews and a couple of other good bits and bobs. YCTTMA has lots of bursts of personal thoughts and ideas on each page and as it is Russ's first go at a zine and it's a pretty good start.

(Natalie)

Benny_boy35@hotmail.com / C/O Suspect Device, PO Box 295, Southampton, S017 1LW

Hoi Polloi Skazine #9

A5/ b&w/ printed/ 52 pages/ £2

People keep saying that ska is dead, but a genre that can inspire a kid to produce a zine this good is far from six feet under. This is a really rad zine, not least the layout which is completely all over the shop. Interviews that people might be interested in are: Rocksteady 7, Planet Smashers, Tim Wells and Court Jester's Crew. The guy who writes this knows what he's talking about, and it's also nice that he seems to love all brands of ska, not just sticking to trad, or 3rd wave, or whichever, as many ska zines seem to! (edd)

Po Box 13347, Rochester, NY 14613, USA

Deadstop

A4/ b&w/ copied/ 32 pages/ £2 (?)

So for a first issue this is pretty rad, with a totally awesome front cover. I think I picked this up at NinjaFest, but not sure. It's got some good interviews with Dead Stop, Rise And Fall and Mental, and then a pretty funny one (considering recent events) with No Warning. There's lots of opinion and rad hardcore photos. Email the dude and see if he's still got a copy. (edd)

frenzied@gmail.com

Gather

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 24 pages/ £2

This booklet comes with a demo from the band of the same name. The zine's got the lyrics to the songs, and explanations to all the songs. It's also got personal essays, and ideas from all the members of the band. The band's made up of xanacho/vegan kids, who I guess I find myself relating to considering my own personal beliefs. Some of the essays are better written than others, but all of them were worth reading. (edd)

vgatherv@yahoo.com

Green Pepper #8 (?)

A4/ red & black/ printed/ 54 pages/ £3

I remember getting Green Pepper and thinking how aesthetically attractive it was, only to be confronted with that old chestnut of form vs function. It may look gorgeous but it's really hard to get into reading it because of how elusively it's laid out. All the same once you're into the text there are some amazing ideas in here. As a project Green Pepper focuses on a different subject each issue. This issue they tackle precarity - the situation many of us find ourselves in, with insecure jobs, crap wages, and crap hours. The issue focuses on why capitalism encourages this state of wage slavery, and ways that we can organise and resist. Precarity is currently the hot topic in the 'activist scene', and if you want an introduction I can't see a better place to start than this. (edd)

(Natalie)

keb-collins@uwe.ac.uk

Longshot Fanzine #5

A5/34 pages/B&W/Copied/£1+SAE or trade

A nice little music zine with interviews with Shaun from Five Knuckle, Zeke, Pistol Grip and Bill Stevenson amongst others plus a fair few record reviews and a smattering of zine, book and dvd reviews. This zine's pretty standard in terms of content and format but that's not to disrespect it cos things like this are always good to see.

(Natalie)

passoutpro@hotmail.com / C/O Scorpion Records, 110 Oxford Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2DN

Lost Souls #8 – Halloween 2004

A5/20 pages/B&W/Copied

This zine has been made by the sort of person who is into combining cuteness with spookiness. If they could be a comic book cartoon character they'd be someone from Little Gloomie. There's a fair bit of content squeezed in with interviews with Dismantled, Assemblage 23, Offspring, Tsunami Bomb, Avenged Sevenfold and Send More Paramedics plus reviews and stuff. However the almost complete lack of images was disappointing as was the massive point 16 text size that had been laid out dangerously close to the margins but that's probably just me being a lay out dictator.

(Natalie)

jackskellington666@hotmail.com

Lucida Console #3 2004

A5/30 pages/Copied/50p

I'm still not sure why you would send your zine if to us for review if in it you have included Rancid News in your top four list of things you hate the most. The mind baffles!?! On top of that the zine is a collection of inane ramblings and rants. I'm yet to decide if this has been written by someone who's either very stupid, very facetious or just plain arrogant. For example, there's an odd interview with a vegan(?) where questions such should the government 'make soldiers turn vegan so that they become more effective Arab-killers' are posed. This is followed by an outburst over Tesco's. Normally this is something I would heartily support yet since the writer couldn't be bothered to research this beyond the point of relating the fact that he didn't like working there it was a bit of a non-article.

Next comes an attack on 'Terrorist Jihadists' (I can't even be bothered to dignify this with a response) and some commentary on 'Art Fags.' Littered with toilet humour and fart jokes it may have been possible to just excuse this as the childish work of a young, ignorant, ill-informed boy but since the author refers to university and travelling I can only conclude that he must be over the age of 18 and should know better. Most bizarre

(Natalie)

cocopatch@hotmail.com

Organise! For Revolutionary Anarchism #63

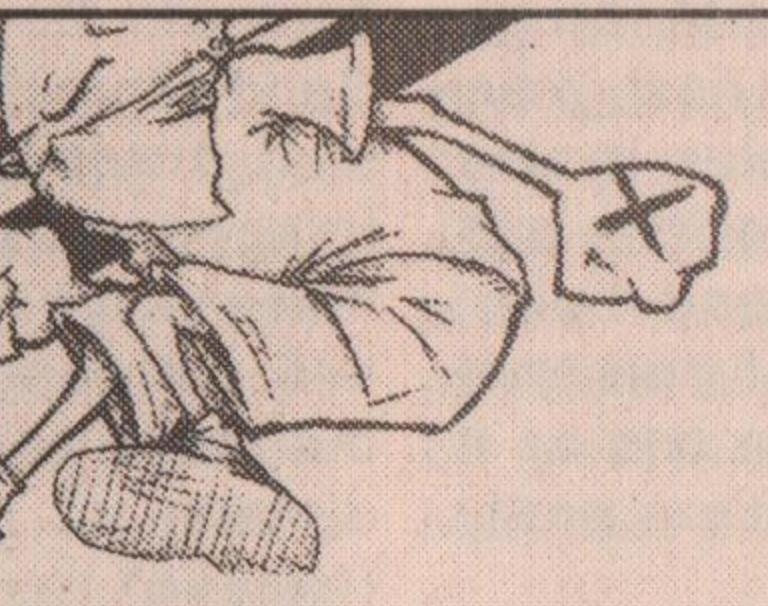
A4/b&w/printed/40 pages/£1.50

Yet again another excellent issue of O! (biased? Me?), I reckon the best for a couple of issues. Beyond the normal letters, reviews and revolutionary portrait (this time of Marinus Van Der Lubbe who burned down the Reichstag), there is a report from an Argentinean anarchist including reports of an anarchist 'gang' who would put Dead

Fanzine Reviews

Prez to shame! There is the final part of the 'In The Tradition', a look at the anarchist movement over the last 20 years. An excellent, original article on nanotechnology, an article on resistance in Iraq, a decent article on school strikes, an interview with an Irish anarcho and an essay on peasant resistance to the Bolsheviks. All round highly worthwhile if you're interested in anarchism!

www.afed.org.uk
c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.



gather

Make it Count #1

A4/b&w/printed/36 pages/ £1.50 (?)

New zine outta Leeds. I quite like it, although it's quite standard. The reprint of the Rollins article on weightlifting is by far the highlight, making me consider (albeit very briefly) taking it up myself. It really offers an insight into Rollins' upbringing and school years, which I find fascinating cos I'm a geek like that. Also interviews with Atari, Break It Up, Damage Control, Rise and Fall and Six Foot Ditch. The

BLU interview's especially good, Lins has a lot to say and it kinda sucks that I had to rush his interview for this zine cos of time constraints and that. There's also another pretty interesting reprint of a Cappo (Youth of Today) interview, in which the guy talks in pretty strong detail about the setting up of the youth crew and that, although at times he sounds like a bit of a straight edge missionary. The zine also has another "how to take pictures" feature, which I'm considering taking along to shows so I can refer to it while trying to work my cheapass bulky Polaroid. Sometimes it goes a bit sketchy, such as a rant about old people on escalators – dude, 10 seconds won't kill you! There's also a feature about Gremlins which, I'm sorry, went right over my head. Get this for the Rollins reprint. (Alan) Ian Gallimore, 17 Ecclesburn Road, Leeds, LS9 9DE

Maximum Rock N Roll #260

A4/ b&w/ printed/ 120 pages/ £3

It should go without saying that MRR is compulsory reading. Since Golnar started working as the co-ordinator though with Mike Thorn it's become even more compulsory. The layout has really gone up a level, and no longer looks like it got put together five minutes before it needs to be at the printers, and seems to have a bit more quality control, though maybe it's just that they're getting more contributions. It reminds me of when I first started reading the zine and how I'd just go from cover to cover without taking much of a break. Ted Rall, Maddy, Johnny Mink and George Tabb all had awesome columns. Essential. (edd)

Active Distribution, maximumrocknroll.com

Moments of Excess (a pamphlet)

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 16 pages/ free

Briefly - because I've run out of time to do reviews (not that you reading this in your comfortable chair will know that!) - this is a pamphlet highlighting how wonderful the moments where we totally abandon

ourselves are. When we just decide to leave town and see where the car that will pick us up will take us and then see what's in that town. The pamphlet talks specifically about the paradigms opened up for us as humans at mass protests where groups of like minded people come together and create a new world, even if it is a world that only lasts for a couple of weeks. The point of the pamphlet is to suggest we should try and keep hold of this world, living it in our day to day lives after the protests have finished. The collective who produced this - the Leeds Mayday collective - have just produced a cool leaflet specific to the Gleneagles G8 protest that you might find interesting too! (edd) lmdg@ntlworld.com

Microcosm Publishing Catalog 2005

A4/ orange & black / printed/ 16 pages/ free (+postage)

OK, so sure this isn't a proper zine, but Microcosm run a really amazing distro, and their catalog should be ordered so that you can see what

awesome stuff they have. Or I guess just visit their website! (edd) Microcosm

The Perfect Mix Tape Segue #3

Fixing the Plumbing

A5ish/24 pages/Copied/\$1 (or vegan cookies)

The clue to this zine is in the subtitle. It's one guy's account of his decision to go for the snip and have a vasectomy. The author felt that he had seen too many friends become unexpected parents, and feeling somewhat bothered by this comes to the conclusion that it would be irresponsible for him to father a child due to the lifestyle he wants to lead and circumstances surrounding his childhood. He's

deeply honest in his narrative and the zine is an enjoyable read just for that alone. It's also refreshing to see a man taking an interest in reproduction issues as this job is so often shouldered onto women so a real round of applause for taking the time to write this all down. The background images which the text has been cut and paste onto betrays an obsession with bicycles, but I guess we knew that already since this is part of the microcosm distro. And if that's not enough to get you interested there's a quick delve into the perils of unknown personalities during house shares. (Natalie)

Joe@microcosmpublishing.com / 5307 N. Minnesota Ave, Portland, OR, 97217 4551, USA

Punk Planet #65

A4/ b&w/ printed/ 130 pages/ £3

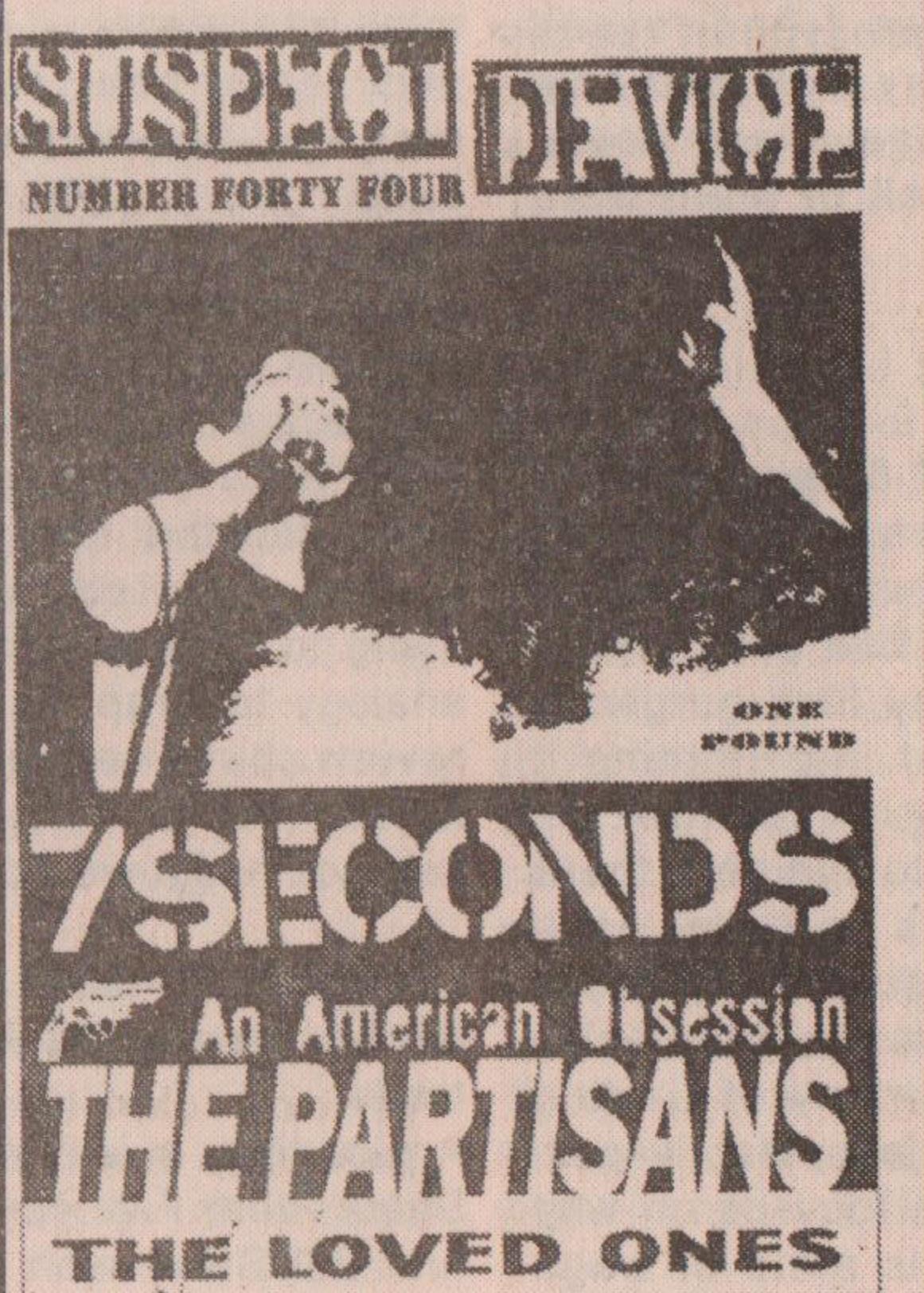
The Krist Novoselic's (bassist of Nirvana) interview is a cause for concern as is the excerpt from his upcoming book - 'Alternative Politics'. The problem is I don't see anything alternative about his ideas, and it's worrying when a punk fanzine has a header running "Every generation has to make a contribution to make the Republic endure." I always one of the goals of being a punk was eradicating nation states, not least the fucking USA. Oh well, the rest of this issue was top notch. There's a good article on the graffiti crackdown in California and on the Pontiac Brothers trial case. There's also cool interviews with Microcosm and Pilot to Gunner, as well as a pretty interesting interview (and photo spread) with a photographer documenting the Iraq war. So yeah a good issue of Punk Planet except for the worrying introduction and Novoselic's interview. (edd) punkplanet.com / fortedistribution.com

Push the Limit #4

A4/b&w/printed/56 pages/£1

Oh Jesus. Ok first things first, this is a fucking amazing hardcore punk fanzine done by Spoiler of Justice, who as you should know are a fuckin awesome Belgian hardcore band. The interviews are almost all fucking stellar, fucking fascinating interviews with fucking amazing bands. Career Suicide, The Wrong Side, Righteous Jams, Restless Youth reads like my fucking playlist and their interviews are fucking interesting as fuck – exactly the shit I wanted to know. Also check interviews with Abusive Action, Knife Fight, Insurance Risk, Altercation, Demo 2 (aka The Fight from Belgium) Criminally Insane (featuring No Warning members, no less), Surf Nazis Must Die, America's Hardcore (a good 20 years after they split) and Barrows (Jaguarz, Crunch Time, SOS and all round Lockin' Out, um, character). Check the fucking awesome reprints of Void and The Faith interviews. There's also an account of the Justice/ Downslide UK mini tour that happened last

April, which at times is a bit dumb, but I caught the tour in someone's front room in London and Justice blew shit up so I forgive them. The writer's also pretty funny at times, such as his suggestion that hardcore's gonna become the state and cops will "wear Raw Deal pins" and moshing "be a national sport" so the real underground kids will start listening to Frank Sinatra and get arrested for it. Now that I've impressed on you how much of an awesome zine this is and how essential it is to your understanding of hardcore circa 2004/ 2005 let me move onto the one thing it will probably be remembered for. Spoiler, in all his infinite wisdom, managed to persuade a load of European hardcore girls to pose, some topless, some in their bras, with "Push the Limit" written somewhere on their person for his zine. Right, yeah it's sexist, yeah it's not great that this kinda



Fanzine Reviews

Roll With the Punches #1

A4/b&w/printed/36 pages/£1 (?)

I really like this one. It's done by Pearson and Owen of Fifty on Red, apparently with a bit of help from Pete and Katie from Courage to Care. The layout's pretty sweet...liking the cover. They only interview Americans, but there's a pretty cool My Revenge interview, as well as interviews with Lights Out and Set Your Goals, both of whom I'm yet to hear. They also talk to Jaguarz, who I quite like but they seem kinda dumb in interviews. Jockin' Out for real, if you know what I'm saying. The Jason Mazzola (former Count Me Out vocalist) interview seems a bit pointless, but then again I was never a CMO fan so I'm probably being a bit unfair. I really like the skating feature and the pictures are awesome. There's also accounts of shows the dudes caught in the States last summer, including Internal Affairs playing in a rented garage. In short, more zines should be like this, a really good mix and I really dug it. (Alan) Kevin Alen, Bosveld 116, 2400 Mol, Belgium pushxthexlimit@yahoo.com

Razorcake #23

A4/ b&w/ printed/ 108 pages/ \$4 or £3.50 (!)

I only just noticed how - comparatively - expensive this zine is. I guess they must just have high printing costs or something! So anyhow this is a lot more interesting than last issue. It's got some cool columns and a couple of interesting interviews plus the usual reviews.

Still overshadowed by the other "big" US fanzines, but I guess it's developing its own little niche! (edd) razorcake.com

waterintobeer fanzine #10



The Cult of Personality

Red and Black Revolution: A

Magazine of Libertarian Communism #8

A4/b&w/printed/32 pages/ £1.50

The theoretical magazine of the Irish platformists Workers Solidarity Magazine. This is normally an interesting read. This issue is no exception and, unsurprisingly given the recent G8 demo in Dublin, focuses on the summit protests of the last few years. There are interviews with Canadian, Italian and Czech anarchists, the mass media (complete with an amazing headline from the Sun), an interesting look at James Connolly, a figure I knew little on and the now standard for anarchists, look at Argentina! Worth it. (Christian)

<http://struggle.ws/wsm>

first time any of the people have done a zine before cause you get the usual 'this is my first column...' stuff, and that to be honest is about it. All the same Scuffed Culture looks like it might turn into a pretty good zine, it'd be nice if they could drop the font size down a notch though. (edd) scuffedculture.net

Shadowplay #12

A5/ b&w/ copied/ 28 pages/ £1 (?)

Another good issue of Shadowplay. It's really cool how this has developed over the past couple of years from a really short, hurried zine full of live reviews into something a little more complete, with more opinions and ideas. Their live reviewing has also gone up a notch. As anyone will attest who has tried to review one, making live reviews interesting is not as interesting as everyone believes, all the same Shadowplay manages to make 'em fascinating. (edd) alexowl126@hotmail.com

Sideburns #9/11/12/13

Various ickle sizes/B&W/Copied

This wins first prize for being the cutest little bundle of zines ever sent into us. Issue 11 is about the size of a special edition postage stamp for Christ's sake and it's the cutest thing ever! The other issues are A6 and A7 sized with lots of pretty drawings and words inside. The authors from Austria and seems like a really cool guys as he opens up his heart with tales of girls, music and life. It has a distinctive emo style and is simply delightful.

Natalie

Sideburns1232@yahoo.com / Andi Dvorak, Kinskygasse, 16-30/63/3, A-1230 Wien, Austria

Suspect Device #44

A5/ b&w/ printed/ 40 pages/ £1

Another excellent issue of SD. There's a really good interview with 7Seconds and good articles on Coke and on a vivisection lab that I'd never heard of, but was grateful for being told about. On top of that you've got your usual interesting and informative columns, and an indepth review section. (edd) Po Box 295, Southampton, SO17 1LW

Water Into Beer #9

A5/ b&w/ printed/ 48 pages/ £1

OK I've totally failed and Luke (Positive Bastard is gonna hate me). See I forgot to review this last issue and swore I'd review it for this issue. Now I just remembered that I lent my copy to my friend cause he was reading it round at my flat and he thought it was absolutely hilarious, asked if he could borrow it, and without thinking about it I said yes. More fool more! Regardless Water Into Beer is always an amazing read, and even if I can't remember anything about issue 9 (I'm sorry Luke!) you'd be a fool to not order it (or to lend it out to a friend you can't get in contact with!) (edd)

Water Into Beer #10

A5/ b&w/ printed/ 48 pages/ £1

Well I may have failed with my review of #9, but I'm not going to fail this time around. This issue is jammed full of interviews, opinions and reviews. There's also Leeds-baiting in the shape of a xAnd-None-Of-The-M-Knew-The-We're-Scenesersx spoof interview. There are more serious interviews with Endstand, a couple of tour reports from the Hero Dishonest tour and Shotgun Democracy tour. Plus lots and lots of columns on various different subjects. As always a good read, though #7 of why the Leeds scene seemed a little below the belt?! (edd) waterintobeer@hotmail.com / 48 West Park Grove, LS8 2DY

Wise Up #3.5

A4/b&w/printed/16 pages/£1

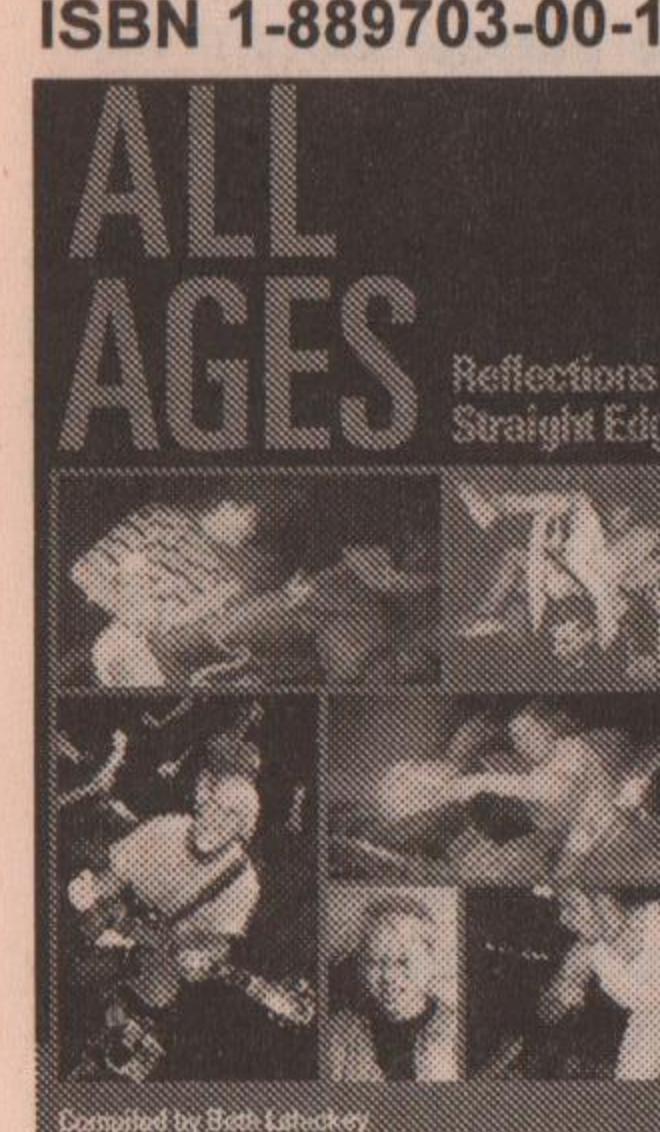
Sweet little number from Holland. Some of it's out of date, but that's cos the guy held onto loads of interviews and shit for ages while waiting for the others to come back, but he decided to release what he had and put the rest in a later issue. Hence this being kind a half-issue, if you will. The guy seems pretty positive in his outlook, even admitting he tries to find a good thing in every record. He also strictly keeps shit to music, which is cool, if a little bland at times. The interview with Nothing Done is pretty cool (check them on tour in February - awesome band) and there's also quite an interesting chat with the Instead drummer (if now *ridiculously* out of date). Other than that, Jaguarz say more dumb stuff and he chats to the vocalist from Breakthrough, who seem to be a kinda First Step side project. All in all, a nice little taster for #4. (Alan)

Wise_upxzine@hotmail.com

All Ages - Reflections on Straight Edge

Beth Lahickey (Eds)
Revelation Records

ISBN 1-889703-00-1 / £10



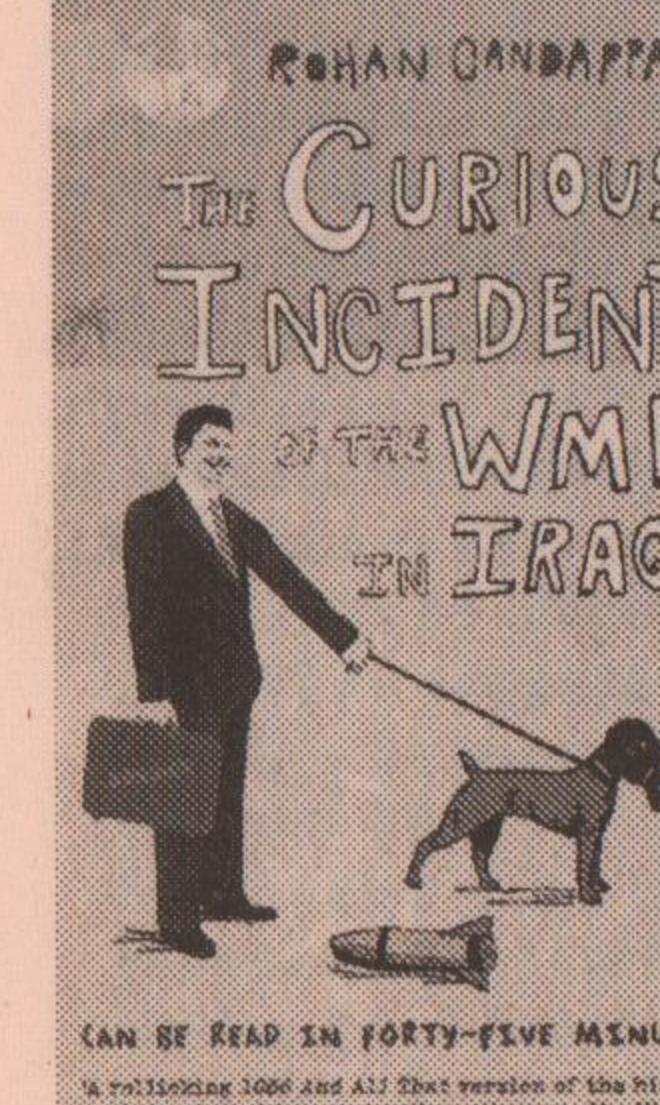
So this was written all the way back in 1997, but there haven't been many new books to review which have much relevance to this zine over the past couple months so we gotta go back in time to get some! All the same I guess this is pretty much mandatory reading, even if it isn't the easiest thing to get hold of. There are a lot of books - most of which have actually come out relatively recently - that deal in depth with the history of the 1980s hardcore scene (Dance of Days, American Hardcore etc. etc.). I think, to a certain degree this was something that Beth Lahickey was attempting to do with this compendium, or at least an in-depth history of the straight edge scene of that period. She's done this by interviewing the most prominent members, and some of the less well known members, of the early straight edge scene to get their opinion on the subject. Despite the fact they're discussing what they did in the '80s, by virtue of the fact that they're comparing it to their current situation (around 1996), means that this book actually ends up telling you a lot about the mid 1990s SxE scene, something which hasn't really been considered (cause I guess it's in the too recent past). All the same it adds an interesting perspective to the straightedge history that All Ages is. It's also good for those that aren't so into reading 'like a whole book, man', since you can just read it an interview at a time. Oh yeah it also has some awesome flyer art in it! Check it out. (edd)

Revhq.com (?)

The Curious Incident of the WMD in Iraq

Rohan Candappa
Profile Books

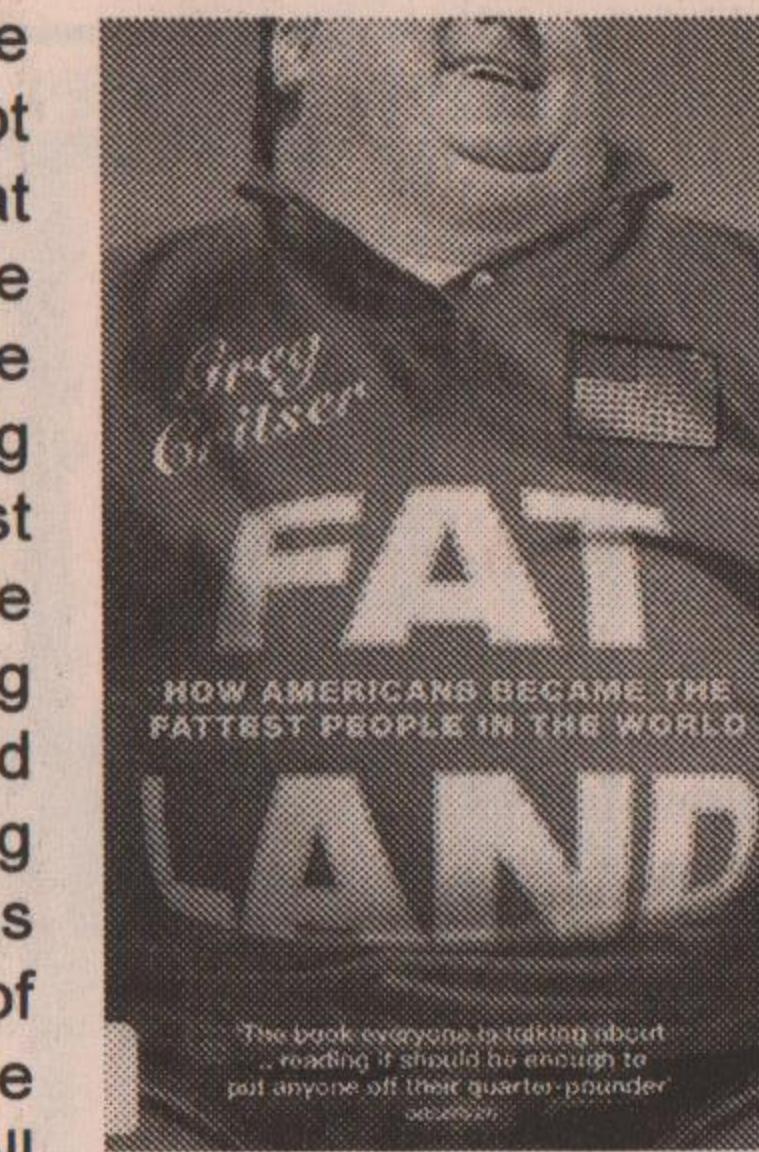
ISBN 1-86197-900-2 / £6



This is written in an almost identical style to 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time', a novel delving into the mind of a kid with Asperger's syndrome. I guess maybe Candappa is trying to imply

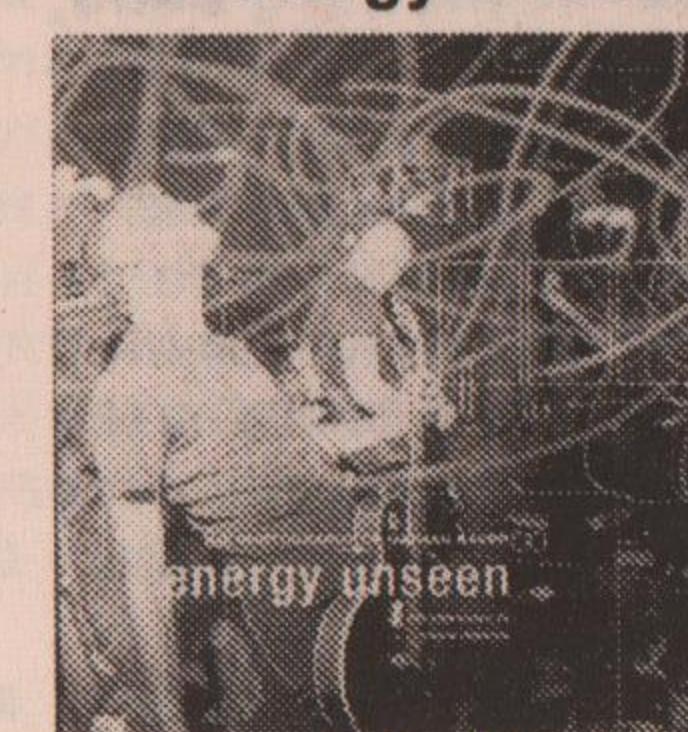
Book Reviews

Fat Land
Greg Critser
Penguin
ISBN 0-713-99739-7 / £10



Tony Blair has autism? To be honest I'm not entirely sure what Candappa's trying to get people to take away with them after reading this. It's clear that he's against the Iraq war, and that he doesn't like the Blair government, but beyond that I'm not entirely sure. It's kind of like a joke that could have been hilarious as a six page magazine article, but begins to really be stretched across a novel. If I'm being brutal I felt like I was reading Socialist Worker (or one of the myriad of the vanguardist crap that's on sale at the big 'protests'), with their slightly black and white call of 'Blair Out', whilst wading through this. I guess the only plus point is that it really does take an hour or so of your life to read this. You'd probably be better off reading Maximum Rock N Roll though. (edd)

Energy Unseen - the photography of
Nathan Baker
Nathan Baker
The Clergy Press



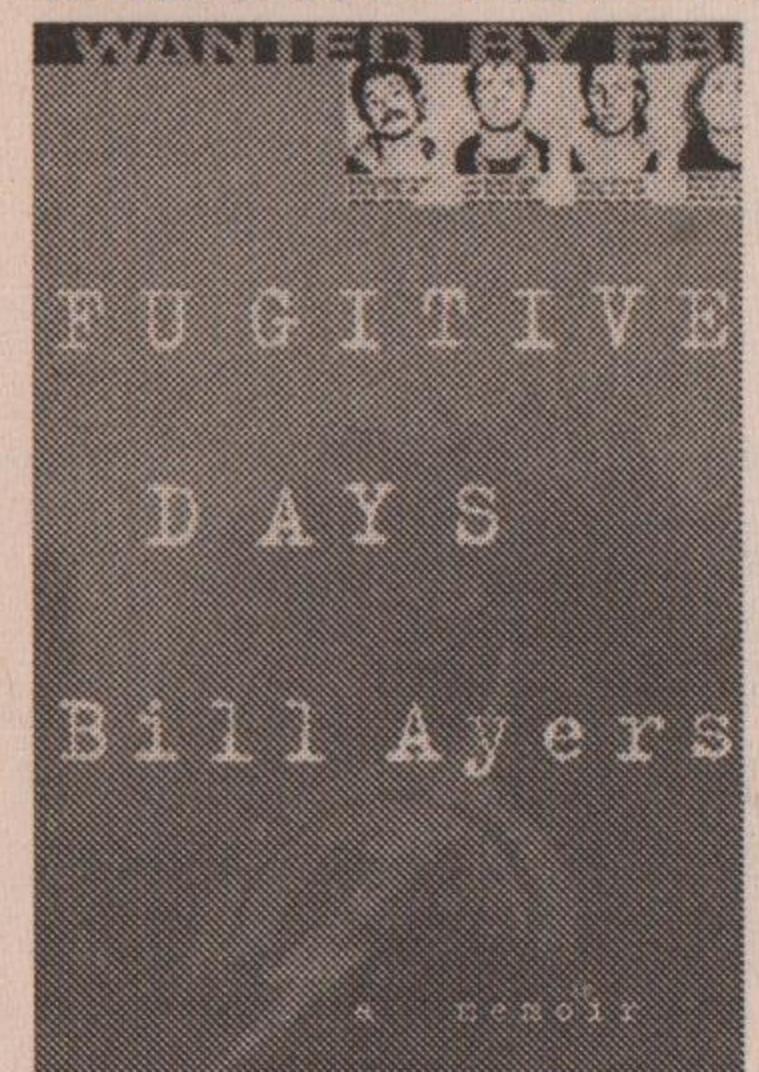
Ever since checking out Nathan's work at www.minn09.com I'd been after this, it cost me \$20 to mail order through No Idea Records & to be honest I felt a little cheated when it arrived. It measures about 8"x8" and has around 25 pages with double the amount of images. There are some fantastic photographs of the like of Yaphet Kotto, Isis, Since By man & Converge (these were used for the "Long Road Home" DVD). So it's good to see some underground bands & this doesn't really just focus on a specific scene, although I think most of them are taken in or around Chicago. I've seen work as good as this coming from some of the UK Photographers such as XsheepX & Stu Bailes, so it just shows you don't need to be special to put out a book of your work, you just need the dollar! This book is nice to have on the coffee table when you have scenesters round for tea, borrow or steal someone else's copy (not mine) as it really isn't worth \$20 & the eight week delivery time! (Joe Vs)

social conditions then you might well enjoy this. I would recommend Fast Food Nation though far above this book! (edd)

Fugitive Days - A Memoir

Bill Ayers
Beacon Press

ISBN 0-8070-7124-2 / £8 (?)



Bill Ayers was one of the Weathermen, the 'crazy kids' who blew up themselves and did stuff like putting a pipe-bomb in the Pentagon. They had terrible politics, and a fairly poor (with hindsight) analysis of their circumstances, all the same their rage, passion, and determination requires a considerable degree of respect. This then is Bill Ayers memoir. Unlike most memoirs - especially 'revolutionaries' memoirs - he is painfully honest. He expresses the fact that before he understood the situation properly he was going to join up to fight in the Vietnam War, he admits that he had a completely sheltered upbringing, and that he made a fuck of a lot of mistakes. He fundamentally doesn't apologize for what he did though. Yeah, as a group they overestimated how successfully their Days Of Rage was going to be, and they got beaten near to death by the cops as a consequence, but at the end of the day Ayers expresses the sentiment that at least they tried, and at least they showed the government, and their media cabal that people weren't happy. Besides the Weather Underground got their revenge by blowing up - in solidarity with the Haymarket Martyrs - the memorial the police had put up to mark where their men had 'valiantly laid down their lives'. The events that Bill Ayers documents are fascinating, and the fact that he was at the heart of them - and as such a key witness - makes this a really exciting memoir. The problem of course lies in the fact that memory is incomplete. People like Anne Hansen have worked around this by partly fictionalizing their works, Bill Ayers takes the more honest approach, explaining that he doesn't know everything and nor is he willing to divulge everything that happened over the period of his life spent as a Weatherman. For those interested in insurrectionary politics, and/or armed struggle this is an interesting read, as it is from a historical point of view. To try to understand the revolutionary undercurrent that was present in the late sixties, and early seventies in the States, this is one of the books that needs to be read. I just hope that Bernadine Dohrn publishes a set of memoirs soon. You should incidentally - if you're interested in the Weather

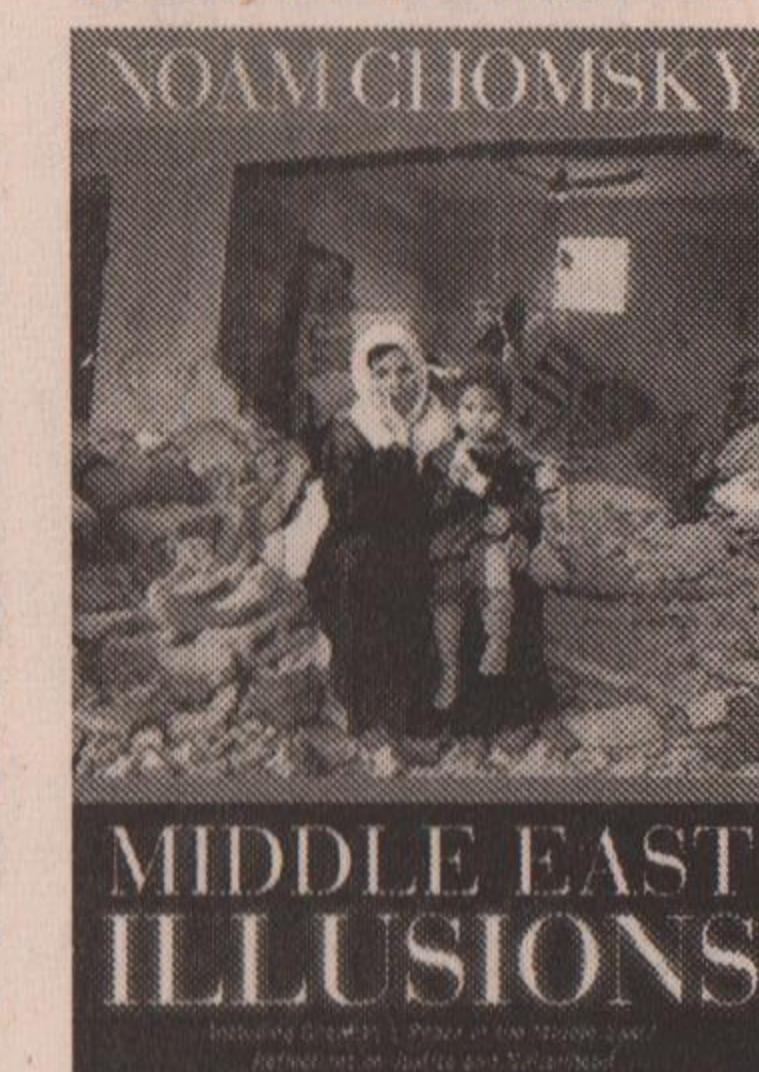
Underground - watch the eponymous titled film by Sam Green and someone else who's name I can never remember (sorry!). I'm sure you can find details about it online, though it's a complete pain ordering it into this country, but worth the effort. (edd)

Active Distro (?) - Jon was selling them at the Anarchist book-fair at any rate.

Middle East Illusions

Noam Chomsky
Rowman and Littlefield Publishers

ISBN 0-7425-3309-3 / £12

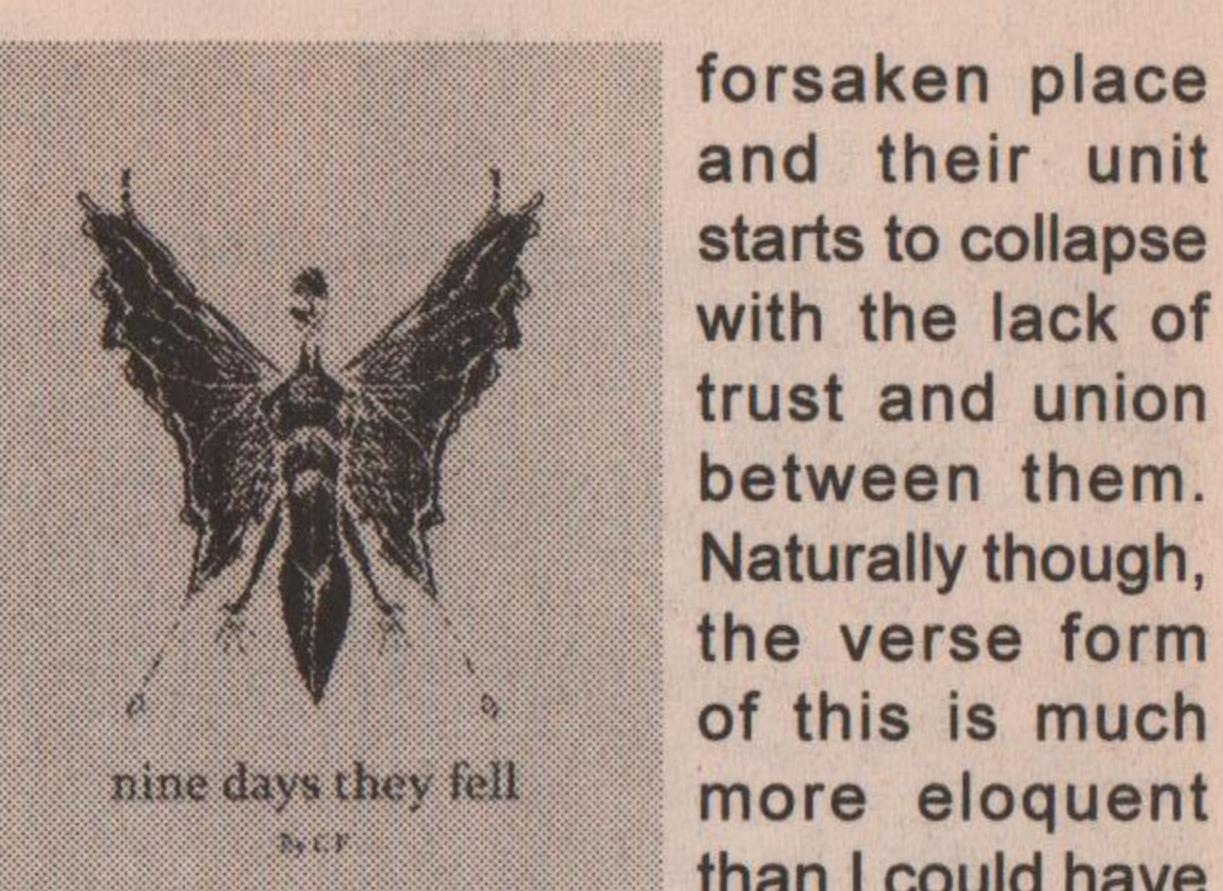


This, I suppose, is a journal of some of Noam Chomsky's essays/articles on the Middle East conflict between Israel and Palestine and the US's part in the problem. The first five chapters were originally written

in 1974, whilst the second half was written as various articles from the end of the 1990s to the present day. As such, unsurprisingly, this doesn't really flow well as a book. What Chomsky says is fairly simple: That Israel needs to start making peace with Palestine, and return land stolen in the 1967 six-day war. That Palestine should accept a two state solution and then work with the Israelis towards an integration of their two societies. That the USA should pretty much fuck off out of the process, and stop acting as king maker by giving un-conditional support to the Israeli government. What Chomsky is saying is fairly un-radical, and backed up by most international opinion (if you take the UN as being an indication of international opinion as opposed to CNN). I'm always baffled by just how many facts he can unearth, and how in-depth he can delve into subjects. As such this is an interesting read, and gives a good introduction into the underlying international political issues surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. All the same, having said that, this isn't Chomsky's most powerful work, nor is it the most interesting, or insightful, book on the Middle East 'issue' (stand up Edward Said). Regardless this is still worth reading. (edd)

Nine Days They Fell
Chronic Fatigue
Zombie Attak! Press

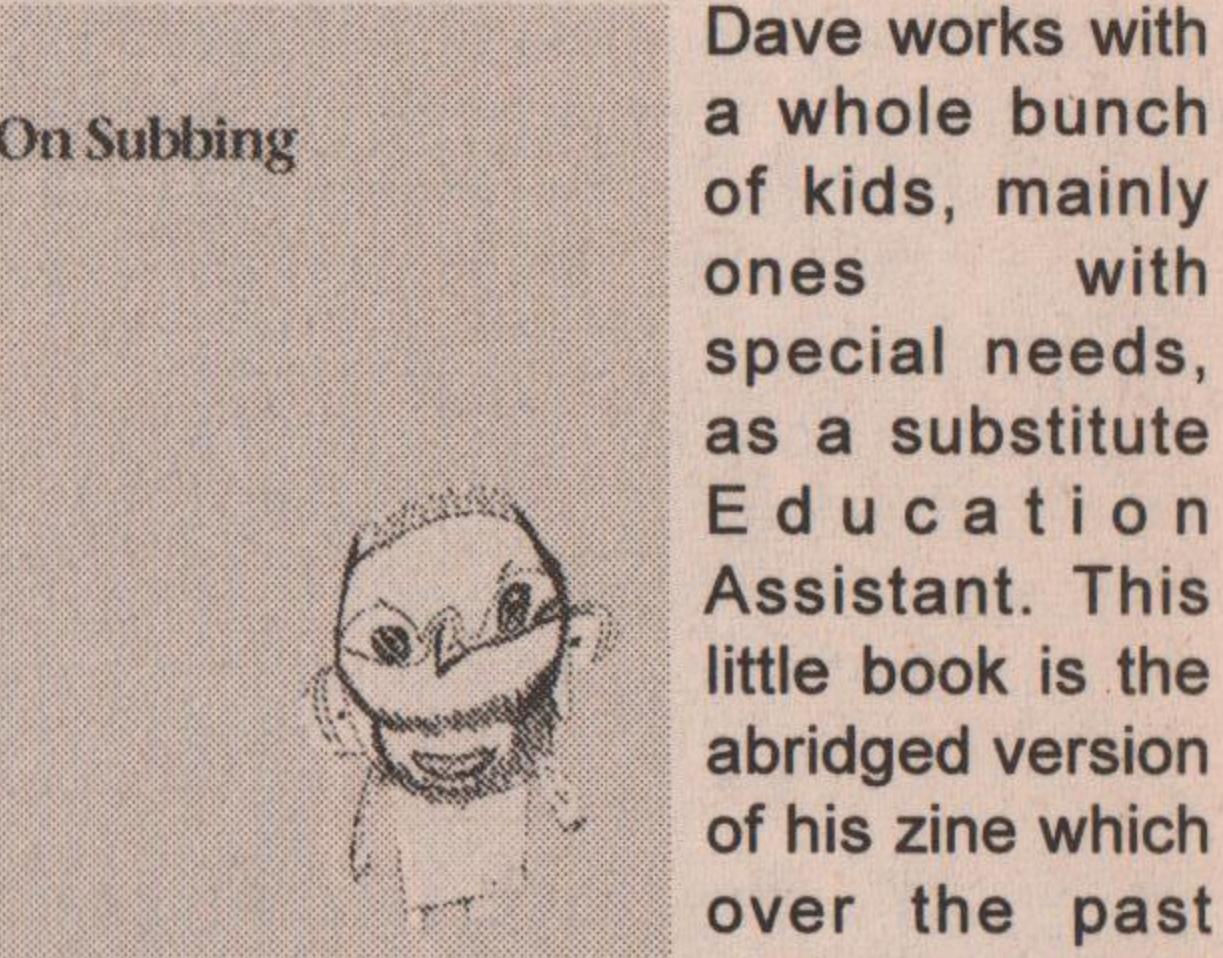
I'm feeling slightly unworthy of being able to review this, not being an avid connoisseur of poetry myself. Of course I know my Yeats from my Keats, but it's not a genre I follow closely. I do feel apt enough to judge though that this piece of work is stunning. The poem loosely goes on with his job so that we'll be able to enjoy further editions from future years.



forsaken place and their unit starts to collapse with the lack of trust and union between them. Naturally though, the verse form of this is much more eloquent than I could have ever put it. The illustrations on each page also mark a change in style for the Mixy comic creator. Everything is looser, ethereal, with a tragic sense of yearning. Put simply, I loved this! (Natalie)

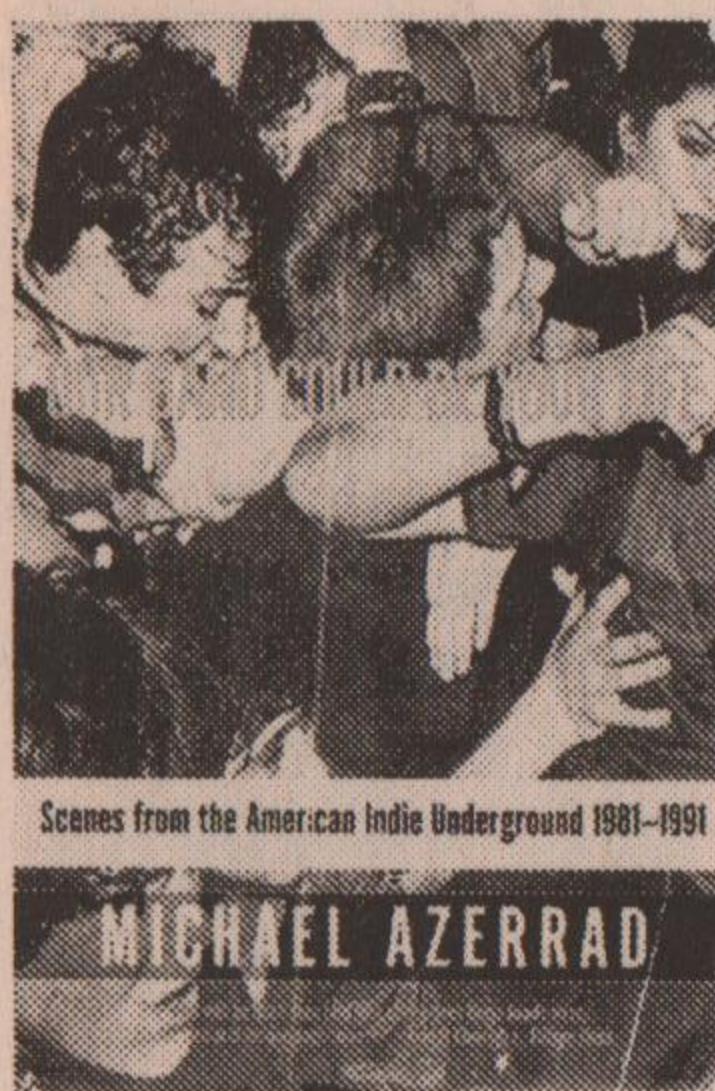
skinned_bunnies@yahoo.co.uk / www.manydeadthings.com

On Subbing - The First Four Years
by Dave
Microcosm Publishing
ISBN 0-9726967-5-X



Dave works with a whole bunch of kids, mainly ones with special needs, as a substitute Education Assistant. This little book is the abridged version of his zine which over the past four years has documented his toils. His diary is dotted with the type of amusing anecdotes that come with working with five to sixteen year olds. Dave's style of writing is dry and matter-of-fact which is where some of the best humour stems from with short but sweet one-liners about what happened in class today. There's the girl who sneezed all over him, the boy who wiped saliva over his back and the endlessly being called 'gay' by primary school children. Sometimes it's lacking in emotion or poetic description but nevertheless I found it compelling stuff. It's interesting to see how Dave grapples with his insecurities and initial feelings of inadequacy around many underprivileged and state failed children. He also has to manage to console the need to be an authority figure whilst also remaining punk and true to himself as well as earning respect and trust from the children. As someone who has recently embarked on my own possible career in teaching, starting with a job as a learning support assistant for a girl with Asperger's Syndrome I can identify with the dilemma as well as being able to smile quietly to myself as I recall children I have met myself who resemble closely some of those mentioned in the book. This book was highly enjoyable and I hope he carries on with his job so that we'll be able to enjoy further editions from future years.

Our Band Could be your Life: Scenes From the American Indie Underground 1981-1991
Michael Azerrad
Back Bay Books



This book is as addictive as Dr Pepper, once you pick it up, forget about getting anything else done that day! I'm sure most of you have this or are at least aware of it, this has introduced me to some of my now favourite bands of all time, with great chapters on some great bands such as Fugazi, Big Black, The Replacements, Black Flag, Minor Threat & Mission Of Burma to name a few. Each chapter is a detailed history of each band, it will make you laugh, cry & question what you think you know. Reading this will make you feel inferior, that time you cut off those combats or had a mohican just ain't punk compared to the shit these bands used to do for the sheer love of music. When Good Charlotte try and convince you they are the living embodiment of punk, flip them off and point them in the direction of this book, it should be made compulsory reading for any child or individual who wants to be in a band. You need this. (Joe Vs)

Shopped – The Shocking Power of British Supermarkets
Joanne Blythman
Fourth Estate
ISBN 0-00-715803-3/£12.99



Tesco take about one pound in every eight pounds that is spent in the British economy alone. When I stopped to contemplate this figure I couldn't believe that it was true but having read this book I'm surprised it's not bigger. At least that's the aim of all the executives and chief directors. It does seem that over the past few years supermarket chains have been tightening their ever present stranglehold over us, our wallets and our landscapes. This book examines all the different factors regarding this phenomenon such as they effect they have on towns, communities, farmers, workers, the environment, people's health and the world in general. It questions whether we should keep on swallowing the myth of the happy shopper and consequently makes a very interesting read.

(Natalie)

RN#9 PAGE: 114

Squatters Handbook - 12th Edition
Advisory Service for Squatters
Advisory Service for Squatters
too punk for an ISBN / £1.50

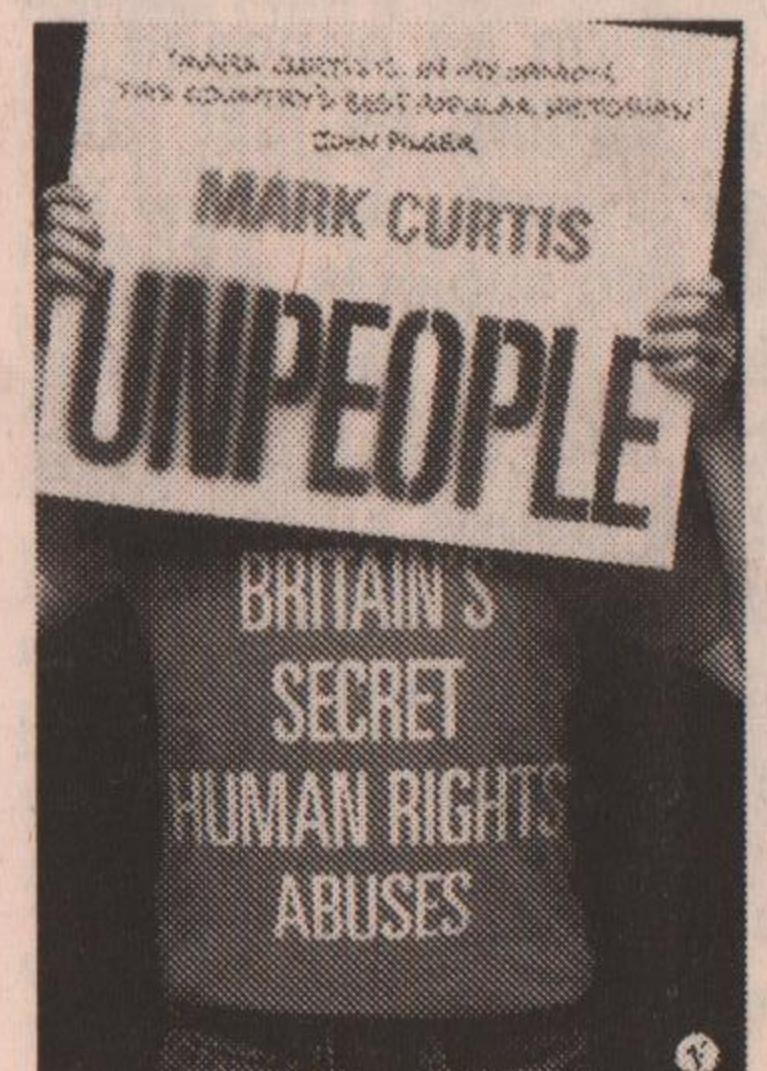


The long running Squatters Handbook from the Advisory Service for Squatters (A.S.S) is pretty much the most comprehensive 'how to squat' guide that you're likely to find. It's got stuff on how to find empty buildings (empties), how to get into them, how to set up the 'leccy and water, and then how to try and resist eviction either at the court or at the property itself. The whole way through it spells out the legal side of everything, and what might happen if you get caught, or what you can say to try and get longer in the building. Whilst being in-depth though it never really gets boring, or particularly bogged down in semantics about the potential political issues that surround squatting - though they're mentioned. Some bits, such as the electricity, or necessarily brief. Chances are - as a collective I was part of - you'll be able to get the 'leccy hooked up by reading this, but you'd probably be better off getting something a little more in-depth. To be honest though it's pretty hard to fault this. It's a significant step up from the 11th edition (which was the one that I relied on when I was squatting), with a whole lot more information, especially about how to defend yourself in court. Definitely recommended if you're considering doing any squatting! (edd)

ASS, 2 St Paul's Road, London N1 2QN or

Active Distro...

Unpeople
Mark Curtis
Vintage
ISBN 0-099-46972-3 / £8



Praise doesn't come much more higher than 'Scrupulously, relentlessly, Mark Curtis rescues the historical and documentary evidence from a web of distortion and self-serving illusion. The range of his inquiries is as

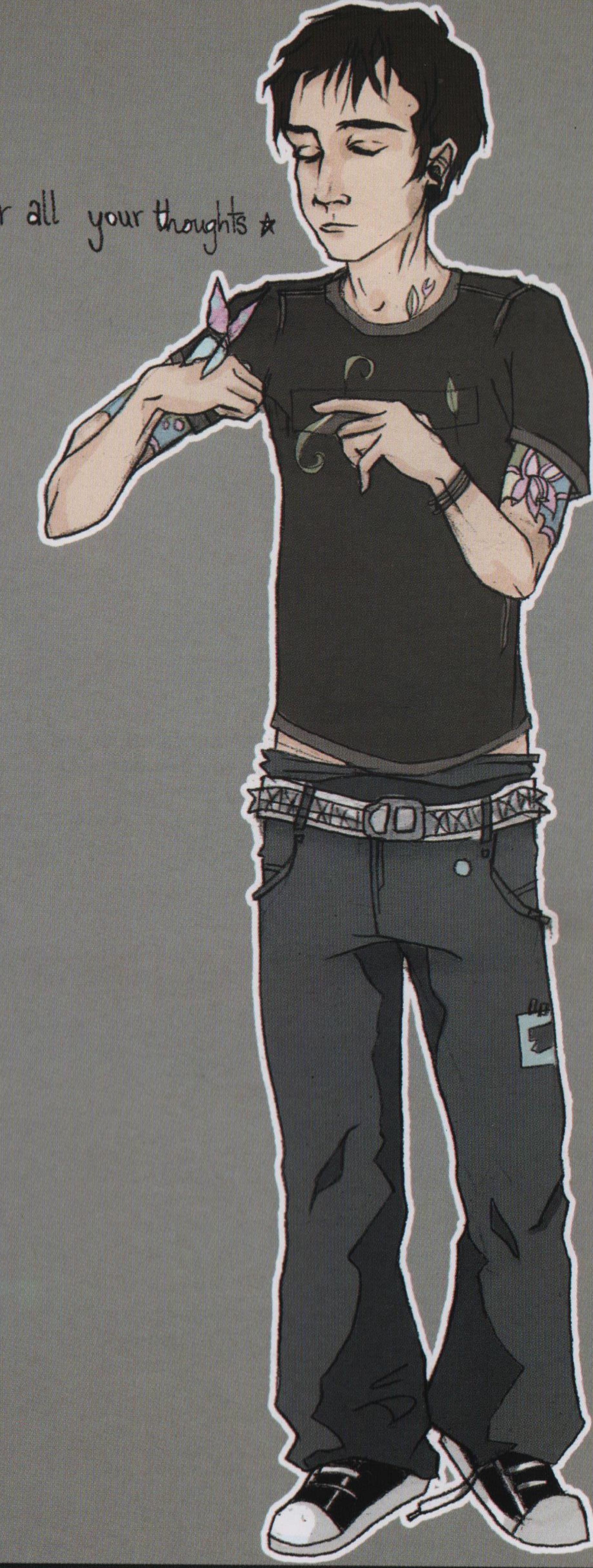
impressive as the care and diligence with which they are conducted. The picture of British policies that he reveals should serve as a call to action for those who hope to understand the world that has been shaped by Western power, and to overcome the injustice and suffering that is, in no small measure, its cruel legacy.' - Noam Chomsky. Unpeople is up there with one of Chomsky's books for amazing insight and the massive number of facts

it unleashes. The difference is whilst Chomsky writes in a verbose, esoteric style Curtis writes - albeit with a fairly academic tone - in everyday English. The main purpose of the book - or at least the point that I took - is to explain the phenomenon of the "unpeople", they are the people that the government, corporations and media pay no attention to. They're the people massacred by US and UK interventions, or by British Aerospace Equipment bombs and landmines (of which BAE made many). They're the people who's deaths are largely ignored, or covered up. Essentially - even though liberals like to believe otherwise - the Western world hasn't moved out of its colonial mindset where the idea of the "savage" who is not even worthy of being considered a fellow human being. Mark Curtis believes that since 1945 Britain has been complicit in the death of at least 10 million people. Curtis tries to make another point by juxtaposing the recent Iraq intervention with these past post-colonial adventures. He highlights the fact that ministers - in past conflicts - lie systematically, and it is only in their private documents that they speak candidly. The clear point is that it would be a massive leap of faith to believe that Blair and his cabinet was doing anything other than lying to the public. He also documents well the media's complicity in all of this, that the media will essentially give far more weight, and credence, to a document coming from Whitehall, than a document from any other institution. Little research or effort is put into checking the factual integrity of the Whitehall statements, and when they are finally discovered as being false it tends to be reported on page four in the bottom right hand corner! To be honest I personally found the chapter on Iraq to be slightly dull, just because I felt I'd heard it all before, likewise the chapter on media and propaganda - though interesting because of its British perspective - pails in analytical comparison to 'Manufacturing Consent', by Herman and Chomsky. It was the second half of the book that I found most interesting with discussion on Britain's history of intervention over the past five decades, and the aid that Britain has always given unquestionably to the USA. Despite what I said earlier about the first half of the book, I'd still highly recommend this. I just hope Curtis is here to stay because he's an incredible writer, and there needs to be someone other than Monbiot and Palast to write about Britain's fuck ups! (edd)

TO BE REVIEWED:

Black Car Leaving - Eddie Willson. We're sorry, we just haven't got around to reading this yet, and we didn't want to do a half-arsed job on the review. It'll be reviewed next issue!

gather all your thoughts *



LINKS for further info.

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Active Distribution - BM Active, London, WC1N 3XX - activatedistribution.org * AK Distribution - Po Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE - akpress.org * CrimethInc - 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA, 30345, USA - crimethinc.com * Dead & Gone Records - 42 Glover Road, Totley, Sheffield, S17 4HN - deadandgone.co.uk * Do The Dog Records - 26a Craven Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5NE * Freedom Press - 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX - ecn.org/freedom * Microcosm Distro - Po Box 14332, Portland, OR 97214, USA - microcosmpublishing.com * Punkermentality - punkermentality.com * Town Clock Recordz - 39 Station Road, Thirsk, YO7 1QH - smallsailor@another.co.uk
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